

DELEGATE's Corner

Outgoing Panel 68 Delegate Jesus O.

My name is Jesus O. and I'm an alcoholic. As your outgoing Area 09 Delegate Panel 68 it has been such a good experience. It's very difficult to put in words because it's a special honor and privilege my Higher Power bestowed on me - what a gift!

I am not the first outgoing delegate and won't be the last but am very grateful to have had this experience. Sharing at the December ASC my thoughts once you became Delegate you pretty much got all the answers by osmosis or something like that. However, after two years, all I know is that I don't get to graduate from A.A.; not from A.A. Recovery, Unity or Service.

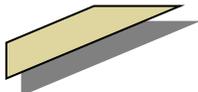
Somewhere in our literature it says that we are His agents and He is our boss. Therefore, my responsibility to Him has not ended with my service position as Delegate. On the contrary, I believe I've been given so much more and the more I am given the more I become indebted to Him and to my fellows.

I know now that it all begins at the group level; being secretary, treasurer, serving coffee, etc. Then, the district and the area and for some GSO. I'm very happy to have had this opportunity because I have made life-long friends. See you all on the road to happy destiny.

___ In gratitude,
Jesus O.

**AREA 09
UPCOMING EVENTS**

- January 12** – Sunday
ASSEMBLY
Area Chair Elections
District 1
- February 09**—Sunday
Area Service Committee
District 20
- March 15**— Sunday
Area Service Committee
District 15
- April 05** — Sunday
Pre-Conference
District 5
- May 17** —Sunday
ASSEMBLY—DEL SHARE
District 18
- June 14**—Sunday
Area Service Committee
District 3
- July 12**—Sunday
FORO
District 22 & 9
- August 09**—Sunday
Area Service Committee
District 2
- September 13**—Sunday
ASSEMBLY
District 12
- October 11**— Sunday
Area Service Committee
District 14
- November 15**—Saturday
SERVATHON
District 25
- December 11**—Sunday
Area Service Committee
District 4



Incoming Panel 70..... Delegate Ed L.

My name is Ed L, alcoholic. After 28 years of drinking, I stopped and started recovering on 05/30/05. Originally from Virginia, and occasionally share I'm an "Eagle Scout with a masters degree" and the attendant disclaimer that my character defects allowed me to simultaneously achieve those two milestones plus alcoholism. My Home Group is in Wrightwood --District 19 in the High Desert where I served as Panel 58 GSR for two years and, in the spirit of stagnation, served as Panel 60 and 62 District Secretary for four years. MSCA 09, I was Panel 64 Grapevine Chair and wrote the Area Guidelines for Grapevine and La Viña. I conducted two writer workshops, served as your Panel 66 Secretary. During that time an invitation was extended to be one of seven Grapevine Editorial Advisory Board members, with still one more year to serve. November 2019 Grapevine published my 29th Grapevine story, for which I'm humbly grateful. For two months, I served as your Panel 68 Treasurer – Accounts Receivable, where I made my first bank deposit in 31 years in January 2018. Subsequently rocketed into the fourth dimension as your Panel 68 Alternate Delegate when the elected individual stepped down. I look forward to my 8th PRAASA in Tucson in March 2020 and my 3rd International Convention July in Detroit. As your pulled-out-of-the-hat Panel 70 Delegate-elect I am honored and humbled to continue my journey into the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service. With a lion's courage for Recovery, a tin man's heart for Unity, and a scarecrow's brains for Service. Looking forward to trudging the yellow-brick road of Happy Destiny with all of you.

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A.A. HISTORY JANUARY

January 1

1943 - Columbus Dispatch reports first Anniversary of Columbus, Ohio Central Group.

January 2

1889 - Sister Ignatia born in Ballyhane, Ireland.

January 3

1939 - First sale of Works Publishing Co. stock is recorded.

January 4

1940 - First AA group formed in Detroit, Michigan.

January 5

1939 – Dr. Bob tells Ruth Hock in a letter that AA has "to get away from the Oxford Group atmosphere".

2001 - Chuck C. from Houston dies sober in Texas with 38 years.

January 6

2000 - Stephen Poe dies -- compiler of the *Concordance to Alcoholics Anonymous*.

January 8

1938 - New York AA splits from the Oxford Group.

January 10

1940 - First AA meeting not held in a private home meets at King School in Akron, Ohio.

January 13

1988 –Dr. Jack Norris AA Chairman/Trustee for 27 years dies.

2003 – Dr. Earle M, author of "Physician Heal Thyself" dies with 49 years of sobriety.

January 15

1937 - Fitz M brings AA meetings to Washington DC.

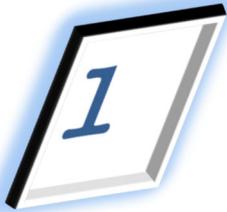
1945 - First AA meeting in Springfield, Missouri.

January 19

1943 - First discussion to start AA group in Toronto.

1944 - Wilson returns from first major AA tour started in 1943.

1999 - Frank M. dies peacefully in his sleep. AA Archivist since 1983.



“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become

An often-misquoted Step

We sit around in meetings emphasizing the importance of a complete and perfect First Step – and its Step One. It is also the one most misquoted Step of the 12 Steps. The word “and” is NOT in Step One. I hear it over and repeatedly. “We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol AND our lives had become unmanageable.” ... this is NOT Step 1.

Contrary to what’s popularly quoted – and believing its fuel that feeds the resistance and confusion about Step One – Step 1 is NOT a “two part” Step. Step One is an admission of alcoholism. (Pg. 30 – A.A.) It’s an acknowledgement that we have become convinced to our innermost selves that we were alcoholic. I made the error, also – thinking that “Step One is a two-part Step.” And, it isn’t.

When I read the descriptions of “what an alcoholic is” in the Big Book – I have yet to find any reference that “and an unmanageable life” has anything to do – with whether a person is alcoholic or non-alcoholic. It just isn’t there. As a matter of fact -- the Dr.'s Opinion, clarifies this where it is written: “Then there are types entirely normal in every respect except in the effect alcohol has upon them. They are often able, intelligent, friendly people.” (Pg. xxviii Dr.'s Opinion - A.A. 3rd Edition)

For me – when I was new in A.A., part of the reason I was confused and could not become convinced that I was alcoholic – was because I was not convinced that “my life was unmanageable” – like I was hearing about it in A.A. meetings. Therefore, I concluded that if my life is not unmanageable – then, I must NOT be an alcoholic.

So... what did I do? I continued drinking and letting my life get progressively more screwed up and allowing my alcoholism to progress without treating it – until I could say “my life is unmanageable.”

Had I known the proper description of an alcoholic

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A.A. HISTORY JANUARY ... continued

January 21

1954 - Hank P dies in Pennington, NJ. Helped Bill start NY office.

January 24

1918 – Bill W. marries Lois Burnham in the Swedenborg Church--Brooklyn Heights.

1945 - First black group St. Louis

1971 - Bill W. dies in Miami Beach.

January 25

1915 - Dr. Bob marries Anne Ripley.

January 26

1971 - NY Times publishes Bill W.'s obituary on its front page --January 30

1961 – Dr. Carl Jung answers Bill's letter with "Spiritus Contra Spiritum".

January without specific dates:

1929 - Bill W. wrote third promise in Bible to quit drinking.

1939 - 400 copies of manuscript of Big Book circulated for comment, evaluation and sale.

1944 - Dr. Harry Tiebout's first paper on the subject of "Alcoholics Anonymous".

1944 - Onset of Bill's 11 years of depression.

1946 - Readers Digest does a story on AA.

1948 - First A.A. meeting in Japan.

1951 - AA Grapevine publishes memorial issue for Dr. Bob.

1958 - Bill writes article for Grapevine on "Emotional Sobriety".

Under the lash of alcoholism, we are driven to A.A. and there we discover the fatal nature of our situation. Then, and only then, do we become as open-minded to conviction and as willing to listen as the dying can be. We stand ready to do anything which will lift the merciless obsession from us.

~Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions,
Page 24

– and realized that the "and my life had become unmanageable" was not part of the description of an alcoholic – I might have had a better chance of grasping the concept of alcoholism. I might not have had to reach a lower bottom in life. Perhaps, my bottom could have been raised.

Why is this important? If we, in AA are not trying to 'help RAISE the bottom' for new members -- all we will have done was to keep the doors open for those who reach the utterly bottomless depth of pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization -- that many of us experienced. Had I known "what" an alcoholic was -- I could have easily observed that I had become alcoholic in my early teens.

I believe it's important: What about all the teen alcoholics out in the world today? Do we want to at least attempt to reach them early? Or, assist them to continue to the gates of insanity and death -- before they can become "convinced" that they are already alcoholic?

And, what else?

- It's wrong. And, it's confusing.
- Using the word "and" is adding a "condition" to alcoholism that just isn't there.
- If we are ever to succeed in helping the still suffering alcoholics to "raise their bottom" the easiest way to do that — would be to admit to our error and correct it.
- We can better understand the meaning of Step One — by looking at it as it was written.

From *American Heritage New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, Third Edition — Dash: a punctuation mark (—) used to indicate a sudden break in thought, to set off parenthetical material, or to take the place of such expressions as that is and namely: "He's running for reelection — if he lives until then"; "Very few people in this class — three, to be exact — have completed their projects"; "She joined the chorus for only one reason — she loves to sing."

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"Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship."



The structure for AA is all designed to provide that the direction taken by AA is that of the group conscience of the whole fellowship, not the dictates of a few.

Individual AA members come together to form Groups. Groups are arranged in Districts. Districts are arranged in Areas. There are generally several Areas in a State. Several states are arranged in each Region. AA in the United States and Canada is under the General Service Board. The United States and Canada send two delegates to the World Service Board that has world-wide responsibility.

Groups elect GSRs (General Service Representatives) which attend District meetings. The GSRs in a District elect a DCM (District Committee Member) to lead the District meetings and to represent the District at meetings of the Area Committees. Meetings of GSRs in an Area are called Assemblies. Area Assemblies send delegates to the AA-wide General Service Conferences that are held every two years. General Service Conference determines matters of AA policy, and the General Service Board operates the day-to-day business of AA.

So, here it is. Step One: "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable." This then means "my life had become unmanageable" – regardless if I was drinking or sober – because of myself, I cannot manage to leave alcohol alone.

-Anonymous



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

"Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward."



"I think he may be hitting bottom."

Our whole A.A. program is securely founded on the principle of humility--that is to say, perspective. Which implies, among other things, that we relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows; that we each see ourselves as we really are --"a small part of a great whole." Seeing our fellows thus, we shall enjoy group harmony. That is why A.A. Tradition One can confidently state, "Our common welfare comes first."

"Does this mean," some will ask, "that in A.A. the individual doesn't count too much? Is he to be swallowed up, dominated by the group?"

No, it doesn't seem to work out that way. Perhaps there is no society on earth more solicitous of personal welfare, more careful to grant the individual the greatest possible liberty of belief and action. Alcoholics Anonymous has no "musts." Few A.A. groups impose penalties on anyone for non-conformity. We do suggest, but we don't discipline. Instead, compliance or non-compliance with any principle of A.A. is a matter for the conscience of the individual; he is the judge of his own conduct. Those words of old time, "Judge not," we observe most literally.

NOTE: Excerpt from Editorial by Bill W.
A.A. Grapevine, December 1947



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