



# DISTRICT 81

## OCTOBER 2023

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### **Step 10:**

***Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.***

### **Tradition 10:**

***Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.***

### **Concept 10:**

***Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.***

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**WHEN ANYONE, ANYWHERE,  
REACHES OUT FOR HELP; I WANT  
THE HAND OF AA ALWAYS TO BE  
THERE. AND FOR THAT: I AM  
RESPONSIBLE.**

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# UPCOMING EVENTS & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**October 4: District 81 meeting** 7pm at Kelley's in La Marque 4604 Gulf Fwy, La Marque, TX 77568

**October 8: Alvin Group 57th Anniversary** beginning at 2pm at Alvin Taylor Street Club, 204 S Taylor St. Alvin, TX 77511; see flyer!

**October 11: Correctional Facilities Committee meeting** 6:30pm at the Bay Area Club, 2111 Webster St, League City, TX 77573

**October 14 & 15: Area 67 SETA Assembly** at Sheraton North Houston Intercontinental Airport, 15700 John F Kennedy Blvd, Houston, TX 77573

**October 18: Website Committee meeting** 6pm online; send email to [john.a@aa-seta.org](mailto:john.a@aa-seta.org) to be added to the Google Meet invite.

**October 18: Literature Committee meeting** 7:30pm on the back porch at the Bay Area Club, 2111 Webster St, League City, TX 77573

**October 25: Finance & Budget meeting** 6:30pm at Jason's Deli in League City, 2755 Gulf Fwy S, League City, TX 77573

**October 25: Treatment Facilities Committee meeting** 6:30pm via Zoom: 868-5564-9879; passcode: 06-10-1935

**October 26: PI/CPC Committee meeting** 4:45pm at the Bay Area Club, 2111 Webster St, League City, TX 77573

**October 27: Archives Committee meeting** 2pm at the Alvin Taylor Street Club, 204 S Taylor Street, Alvin, TX 77511

**October 27-29: TXSCYPAA (Texas State Conference of Young People in A.A.)** at the South Shore Harbor Resort, 2500 South Shore Blvd, League City, TX 77573; see flyer!

**October 30: Newsletter Committee meeting** 5pm at the Helen Hall Public Library, 100 W. Walker St., League City; email [gwen.r@aa-seta.org](mailto:gwen.r@aa-seta.org) for more info.

**October 31: Grapevine Committee meeting** 6pm at the Texas City Group, 518 6th Ave N, Texas City, TX 77590

**November 5: Treatment Facilities Committee Fall Workshop** 1:30pm at the Bay Area Club, 2111 Webster St, League City, TX 77573; see flyer!

**January 12-14: Tyler A.A. Anniversary** at the Tyler Rose Garden Center, 420 Rose Park Dr, Tyler, TX 75702

**January 19-21 2024: 61st Annual SETA Convention** at the Moody Gardens Convention Center, 7 Hope Blvd, Galveston, TX 77554; see flyer!



08 OCTOBER 2023

# ALVIN GROUP

CELEBRATES

## 57TH ANNIVERSARY

- 2:00 PM OPENING
- 2:30 PM DENA F-KATY  
23 YRS ALANON
- 3:45 PM BBQ DINNER
- 4:45 PM ALVIN GROUP HISTORY  
SOBRIETY COUNTDOWN
- 5:00 PM KEITH M-7YRS  
HAPPY HOUR GROUP-  
BAY AREA CLUB

ALVIN TAYLOR STREET CLUB  
204 S TAYLOR ST  
ALVIN TX 77511

# TXSCYPAA 42

2500 SOUTH SHORE BLVD, LEAGUE CITY, TX 77573

OCT 27-29  
SOUTH SHORE  
HARBOR RESORT



T X S C Y P A A 4 2 . O R G

## Tyler AA Anniversary

January 12-14, 2024



...."all sorts of remarkable things followed."

Join us in celebrating seventy-seven years of  
Alcoholics Anonymous in Tyler, TX  
Tyler Rose Garden Center  
420 Rose Park Dr., Tyler, TX

Sobriety "ROOTED" in Texas!

Pre-registration \$30.00  
on-site \$35.00

Pre-register for a chance to win a set of  
speaker recordings!

### HOST HOTEL INFORMATION

Hilton Garden Inn  
220 E. Grande  
Blvd. Tyler, TX  
(903) 509-1166

Ask for AA Convention rate

Follow us on Facebook:  
facebook.com/TylerAnniversary

For more information contact:  
Lisa G. (903) 221-4987  
Crystal R. (903) 316-8832  
Joe R. (903) 316-2016  
aatyleranniversary@gmail.com

Pre-register Online at:  
tyleranniversary.org



G&L Tapes Speaker Recordings  
Available  
Tyler AA Central Service Booth  
Al-Anon Booth  
NETA Archives Display

RAFFLES-GREAT PRIZES!!!

### Friday, January 12

- 5:00 pm: Registration
- 6:00 pm: Dinner
- 7:00 pm: Meet the Speakers
- 7:45 pm: RAFFLE!
- 8:00 pm: AA Speaker  
Dawn F. - Dickenson, TX

### Saturday, January 13

- 8:00 am: Coffee & Donuts
- 9:00 am: AA Speaker  
Tracie J. - Irving, TX
- 10:30 am: Chairperson Workshop  
Gary K. & Jackey B.
- 12:00 pm: Lunch Break
- 1:30 pm: AA speaker  
Toni S. - Vandergrift, PA
- 3:00 pm: Sponsorship Workshop  
Chris R. - Ingram, TX  
Myers R. - Ingram, TX
- 4:30 pm: Al-Anon Speaker  
Vannoy S. - Justin, TX

6:00 pm: Dinner  
7:00 pm: Skit  
"THE COMMITTEE  
INSIDE BOB'S HEAD"

- 7:30 pm: RAFFLE
- 7:45 pm: SOBRIETY COUNTDOWN
- 8:00 pm: AA Speaker  
Chris R. - Ingram, TX

### Sunday, January 14

- 8:00 am @ Downtown Suburban Group  
1700 E. Front St., Tyler, TX
- 8:00 am: Potluck Breakfast  
hosted by Al-Anon
- 9:00 am: Al-Anon Speaker  
Nancy J. - Santa Fe, TX
- 10:30 am: AA Speaker  
Myers R. - Ingram, TX
- 11:00 am: Closing of 77th  
AA Anniversary



## WANT TO DO SERVICE WORK IN AA? JOIN US!

### TREATMENT FACILITIES COMMITTEE FALL WORKSHOP 2023

### WHEN?

SUNDAY  
NOVEMBER 5  
1:30 PM

### WHERE?

BAY AREA CLUB  
2111 WEBSTER ST  
LEAGUE CITY, TX 77573

# WHERE DID THE 12 STEPS COME FROM?

A FRAGMENT OF HISTORY BY BILL W.

JULY 1953 A.A. GRAPEVINE

AAs are always asking: "Where did the Twelve Steps come from?" In the last analysis, perhaps nobody knows. Yet some of the events which led to their formulation are as clear to me as though they took place yesterday.

So far as people were concerned, the main channels of inspiration for our Steps were three in number -- the Oxford Groups, Dr. William D. Silkworth of Towns Hospital and the famed psychologist, William James, called by some the father of modern psychology. The story of how these streams of influence were brought together and how they led to the writing of our Twelve Steps is exciting and in spots downright incredible.

Many of us will remember the Oxford Groups as a modern evangelical movement which flourished in the 1920's and early 30's, led by a one-time Lutheran minister, Dr. Frank Buchman. The Oxford Groups of that day threw heavy emphasis on personal work, one member with another. AA's Twelfth Step had its origin in that vital practice. The moral backbone of the "O.G." was absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love. They also practiced a type of confession, which they called "sharing";

the making of amends for harms done they called "restitution." They believed deeply in their "quiet time," a meditation practiced by groups and individuals alike, in which the guidance of God was sought for every detail of living, great or small.

These basic ideas were not new; they could have been found elsewhere. But the saving thing for us first alcoholics who contacted the Oxford Groupers was that they laid great stress on these particular principles. **And fortunate for us was the fact that the Groupers took special pains not to interfere with one's personal religious views. Their society, like ours later on, saw the need to be strictly non-denominational.**

In the late summer of 1934, my well-loved alcoholic friend and schoolmate "Ebbie" had fallen in with these good folks and had promptly sobered up. Being an alcoholic, and rather on the obstinate side, he hadn't been able to "buy" all the Oxford Group ideas and attitudes. Nevertheless, he was moved by their deep sincerity and felt mighty grateful for the fact that their ministrations had, for the time being, lifted his obsession to drink.

When he arrived in New York in the late fall of 1934, Ebbie thought at once of me. On a bleak November day he rang up. Soon he was looking at me across our kitchen table at 182 Clinton Street, Brooklyn, New York. As I remember that conversation, he constantly used phrases like these: "I found I couldn't run my own life"; "I had to get honest with myself and somebody else;" "I had to make restitution for the damage I had done;" "I had to pray to God for guidance and strength, even though I wasn't sure there was any God;" "And after I'd tried hard to do these things I found that my craving for alcohol left." Then over and over Ebbie would say something like this: **"Bill, it isn't a bit like being on the water wagon. You don't fight the desire to drink -- you get released from it. I never had such a feeling before."**

Such was the sum of what Ebbie had extracted from his Oxford Group friends and had transmitted to me that day. While these simple ideas were not new, they certainly hit me like tons of brick. Today we understand just why that was . . . one alcoholic was talking to another as no one else can.

Two or three weeks later, December 11th to be exact, I staggered into the Charles B. Towns Hospital, that famous drying-out emporium on Central Park West, New York City. I'd been there before, so I knew and already loved the doctor in charge -- Dr. Silkworth. It was he who was soon to contribute a very great idea without which AA could never have succeeded. For years he had been proclaiming alcoholism an illness, an obsession of the mind coupled with an allergy of the body. By now I knew this meant me. I also understood what a fatal combination these twin ogres could be. Of course, I'd once hoped to be among

the small percentage of victims who now and then escape their vengeance. But this outside hope was now gone. I was about to hit bottom. That verdict of science -- the obsession that condemned me to drink and the allergy that condemned me to die -- was about to do the trick. That's where the medical science, personified by this benign little doctor, began to fit it in. Held in the hands of one alcoholic talking to the next, this double-edged truth was a sledgehammer which could shatter the tough alcoholic's ego at depth and lay him wide open to the grace of God.

In my case it was of course Dr. Silkworth who swung the sledge while my friend Ebbie carried to me the spiritual principles and the grace which brought on my sudden spiritual awakening at the hospital three days later. [Dec. 14, 1934] I immediately knew that I was a free man. And with this astonishing experience came a feeling of wonderful certainty that great numbers of alcoholics might one day enjoy the priceless gift which had been bestowed upon me.

### **Third Influence**

At this point a third stream of influence entered my life through the pages of William James' book, "Varieties of Religious Experience." Somebody had brought it to my hospital room. Following my sudden experience, Dr. Silkworth had taken great pains to convince me that I was not hallucinated. But William James did even more. Not only, he said, could spiritual experiences make people saner, they could transform men and women so that they could do, feel and believe what had hitherto been impossible to them. It mattered little whether these awakenings were sudden or gradual, their variety could be almost infinite. But the biggest payoff of that noted book was this: in most of the cases described, those who had been transformed were hopeless people. In some controlling area of their lives they had met absolute defeat. Well, that was me all right. In complete defeat, with no hope or faith whatever, I had made an appeal to a Higher Power. I had taken Step One of today's AA program -- "admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." I'd also taken Step Three -- "made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understood him." Thus was I set free. It was just as simple, yet just as mysterious, as that.

These realizations were so exciting that I instantly joined up with the Oxford Groups. But to their consternation I insisted on devoting myself exclusively to drunks. This was disturbing to the O.G.'s on two counts. Firstly, they wanted to help save the whole world. Secondly, their luck with drunks had been poor. Just as I joined they had been working over a batch of alcoholics who had proved disappointing indeed. One of them, it was rumored, had flippantly cast his shoe through a valuable stained glass window of an Episcopal church across the alley from O.G. headquarters. Neither did they take kindly to my repeated declaration that it shouldn't take long to sober up all the drunks in the world. They rightly declared that my conceit was still immense.

### **Something Missing**

After some six months of violent exertion with scores of alcoholics which I found at a nearby mission and Towns Hospital, it began to look like the Groupers were right. I hadn't sobered up anybody. In Brooklyn we always had a houseful of drinkers living with us, sometimes as many as five. My valiant wife, Lois, once arrived home from work to find three of them fairly tight. They were whaling each other with two-by-fours. Though events like these slowed me down somewhat, the persistent conviction that a way to sobriety could be found never seemed to leave me. There was, though, one bright spot. My sponsor, Ebbie, still clung precariously to his new-found sobriety.

What was the reason for all these fiascoes? If Ebbie and I could achieve sobriety, why couldn't all the rest find it too? Some of those we'd worked on certainly wanted to get well. We speculated day and night why nothing much had happened to them. Maybe they couldn't stand the spiritual pace of the Oxford Group's four absolutes of honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love. In fact some of the alcoholics declared that this was the trouble. The aggressive pressure upon them to get good overnight would make them fly high as geese for a few weeks and then flop dismally. They complained, too, about another form of coercion -- something the Oxford Groupers called "guidance for others." A "team" composed of non-alcoholic Groupers would sit down with an alcoholic and after a "quiet time" would come up with precise

instructions as to how the alcoholic should run his own life. As grateful as we were to our O.G. friends, this was sometimes tough to take. It obviously had something to do with the wholesale skidding that went on.

But this wasn't the entire reason for failure. After months I saw the trouble was mainly in me. I had become very aggressive, very cocksure. I talked a lot about my sudden spiritual experience, as though it was something very special. I had been playing the double role of teacher and preacher. In my exhortations I'd forgotten all about the medical side of our malady, and that need for deflation at depth so emphasized by William James had been neglected. We weren't using that medical sledgehammer that Dr. Silkworth had so providentially given us.

Finally, one day, Dr. Silkworth took me back down to my right size. Said he, **"Bill, why don't you quit talking so much about that bright light experience of yours, it sounds too crazy. Though I'm convinced that nothing but better morals will make alcoholics really well, I do think you have got the cart before the horse. The point is that alcoholics won't buy all this moral exhortation until they convince themselves that they must. If I were you I'd go after them on the medical basis first. While it has never done any good for me to tell them how fatal their malady is, it might be a very different story if you, a formerly hopeless alcoholic, gave them the bad news. Because of this identification you naturally have with alcoholics, you might be able to penetrate where I can't. Give them the medical business first, and give it to them hard. This might soften them up so they will accept the principles that will really get them well."**

### Then Came Akron

Shortly after this history-making conversation, I found myself in Akron, Ohio, on a business venture which promptly collapsed. Alone in the town, I was scared to death of getting drunk. I was no longer a teacher or a preacher, I was an alcoholic who knew that he needed another alcoholic as much as that one could possibly need me. Driven by that urge, I was soon face to face with Dr. Bob. It was at once evident that Dr. Bob knew more of the spiritual things than I did. He also had been in touch with the Oxford Groupers at Akron. But somehow he simply couldn't get sober. Following Dr. Silkworth's advice, I used the medical sledgehammer. I told him what alcoholism was and just how fatal it could be. Apparently this did something to Dr. Bob. On June 10, 1935, he sobered up, never to drink again. When, in 1939, Dr. Bob's story first appeared in the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, he put one paragraph of it in italics. Speaking of me, he said: *"Of far more importance was the fact that he was the first living human with whom I had ever talked, who knew what he was talking about in regard to alcoholism from actual experience. In other words, he talked my language."*

### The Missing Link

Dr. Silkworth had indeed supplied us the missing link without which the chain of principles now forged into our Twelve Steps could never have been complete. Then and there, the spark that was to become *Alcoholics Anonymous* had been struck.

During the next three years after Dr. Bob's recovery our growing groups at Akron, New York and Cleveland evolved the so-called word-of-mouth program of our pioneering time. As we commenced to form a society separate from the Oxford Group, we began to state our principles something like this:

1. We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol.
2. We got honest with ourselves.
3. We got honest with another person, in confidence.
4. We made amends for harms done others.
5. We worked with other alcoholics without demand for prestige or money.
6. We prayed to God to help us to do these things as best we could.

Though these principles were advocated according to the whim or liking of each of us, and though in Akron and Cleveland they still stuck by the O.G. absolutes of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, this

was the gist of our message to incoming alcoholics up to 1939, when our present Twelve Steps were put to paper.

I well remember the evening on which the Twelve Steps was written. I was lying in bed quite dejected and suffering from one of my imaginary ulcer attacks. Four chapters of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, had been roughed out and read in meetings at Akron and New York. We quickly found that everybody wanted to be an author. The hassles as to what should go into our new book were terrific. For example, some wanted a purely psychological book which would draw in alcoholics without scaring them. We could tell them about the "God business" afterwards. A few, led by our wonderful southern friend, Fitz M., wanted a fairly religious book infused with some of the dogma we had picked up from the churches and missions which had tried to help us. The louder the arguments, the more I felt in the middle. It appeared that I wasn't going to be the author at all. I was only going to be an umpire who would decide the contents of the book. This didn't mean, though, that there wasn't terrific enthusiasm for the undertaking. Every one of us was wildly excited at the possibility of getting our message before all those countless alcoholics who still didn't know.

Having arrived at Chapter Five, it seemed high time to state what our program really was. I remember running over in my mind the word-of-mouth phrases then in current use. Jotting these down, they added up to the six named above. Then came the idea that our program ought to be more accurately and clearly stated. Distant readers would have to have precise set of principles. Knowing the alcoholic's ability to rationalize, something airtight would have to be written. We couldn't let the reader wiggle out anywhere. Besides, a more complete statement would help in the chapters to come where we would need to show exactly how the recovery program ought to be worked.

### **12 Steps in 30 Minutes**

At length I began to write on a cheap yellow tablet. I split the word-of-mouth program up into smaller pieces, meanwhile enlarging its scope considerably. Uninspired as I felt, I was surprised that in a short time, perhaps half an hour, I had set down certain principles which, on being counted, turned out to be twelve in number. And for some unaccountable reason, I had moved the idea of God into the Second Step, right up front. Besides, I had named God very liberally throughout the other steps. In one of the steps I had even suggested that the newcomer get down on his knees.

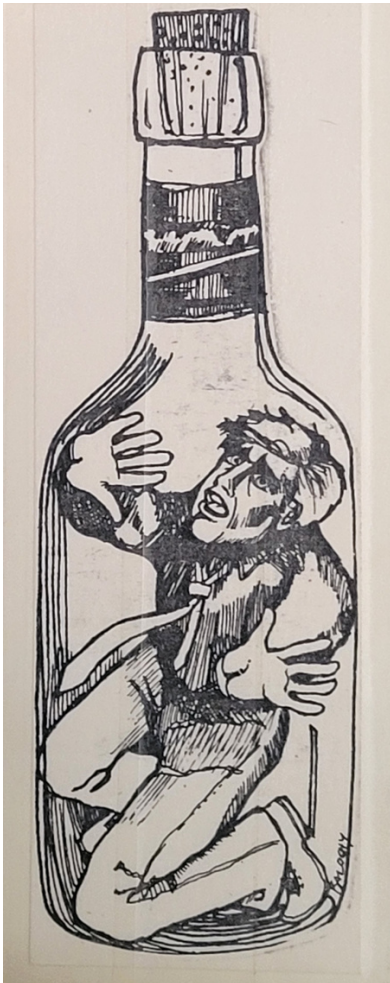
When this document was shown to our New York meeting the protests were many and loud. Our agnostic friends didn't go at all for the idea of kneeling. Others said we were talking altogether too much about God. And anyhow, why should there be twelve steps when we had done fine on six? Let's keep it simple, they said.

This sort of heated discussion went on for days and nights. But out of it all there came a ten-strike for Alcoholics Anonymous. Our agnostic contingent, speared by Hank P. and Jim B., finally convinced us that we must make it easier for people like themselves by using such terms as "a Higher Power" or "God as we understand Him!" Those expressions, as we so well know today, have proved lifesavers for many an alcoholic. They have enabled thousands of us to make a beginning where none could have been made had we left the steps just as I originally wrote them. Happily for us there were no other changes in the original draft and the number of steps stood at twelve. Little did we then guess that our Twelve Steps would soon be widely approved by clergymen of all denominations and even by our latter-day friends, the psychiatrists.

This little fragment of history ought to convince the most skeptical that nobody invented Alcoholics Anonymous.

**It just grew...by the grace of God.**

## SEPTEMBER FINANCE AND BUDGET REPORT



D81 Budget Summary	
Opening Checkbook Balance	\$ 14,914.47
Group Contributions	\$ 180.00
Other Contributions	
Less Expenses	\$ 785.24
Net Income	\$ (605.24)
Ending Checkbook Balance	\$ 14,309.23
Prudent Reserve Emergency Funds	\$ (2,000.00)
Unused Budget (Restricted Deficit)	\$ (7,339.35)
Available Funds	\$ 4,969.88

There but for the grace of God go I.  
May we never again have to relive this horror story!

-Gwen R.  
Newsletter Editor

Illustration from unknown origin (found as a bookmark in a used bookstore)



"I've been sober nine months, but I'm still working on a number of character defects."

Comic submitted by Robert H.