



In this February issue:
Step Two, Tradition Two,
and Hope

COIN Schedule of Topics	2
Resources	3
Tradition of the Month	4
Story, Art, Poetry, and Puzzle Submissions	5
Special Events	13
Writing for the COIN	14
Central Office	16

COIN Schedule of Topics

Step Two

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

Tradition Two

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.

Hope

To want something to happen or be true and think that it could happen or be true. Someone or something on which hopes are centered.

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, copyright ©2021, Merriam-Webster, Inc.

Please email all submissions to coin@aasanjose.org

Newsletter Issue Month	Submission Deadline	Step & Tradition	Virtue
January	12-20	1	Honesty
February	01-20	2	Hope
March	02-20	3	Faith
April	03-20	4	Courage
May	04-20	5	Integrity
June	05-20	6	Willingness
July	06-20	7	Humility
August	07-20	8	Love
September	08-20	9	Justice
October	09-20	10	Perseverance
November	10-20	11	Spiritual Awareness
December	11-20	12	Service

Resources

COIN – Central Office Intergroup Newsletter

<https://aasanjose.org/coin>

Financials/Minutes

<https://aasanjose.org/central-office-financials-and-intergroup-minutes>

Calendar of Events

<https://aasanjose.org/events>

Celebrating Sobriety Birthdays

<https://aasanjose.org/celebrating-birthdays>

Meeting Guide

<https://aasanjose.org/meetings>

Contributions

<https://aasanjose.org/contributions>

Intergroup Information & Orientation

<https://aasanjose.org/intergroup-orientation>

Service Opportunities

<https://aasanjose.org/service>

Central Office Information

<https://aasanjose.org/central-office>

COIN Editor: Geena Louise R.

Sunlight of the Spirit **Cover Art:** Elizabeth M.

Central Office Executive Director: Jody W.

The COIN is published on behalf of the Santa Clara County Intergroup Service Group of Alcoholics Anonymous (Intergroup). Opinions expressed are the writers', and publication of any article, event, or other information does not imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous, Intergroup, or Central Office. Quotations from A.A. books and pamphlets, and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

COIN is the Central Office Intergroup Newsletter. It is what the *A.A. Fact File* calls "*A.A. Literature Prepared by Local Groups.*" The opinions are those of the individual authors and may or may not be representative of A.A. as a whole.

Tradition of the Month

Tradition Two

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.

Long Form

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.

Practice These Principles – Tradition Two

1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, A.A. committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with A.A. Twelfth Step jobs or other A.A. responsibility?
3. Do I look for credit in my A.A. jobs? Praise for my A.A. ideas?
4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
5. Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at A.A. chores?
6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

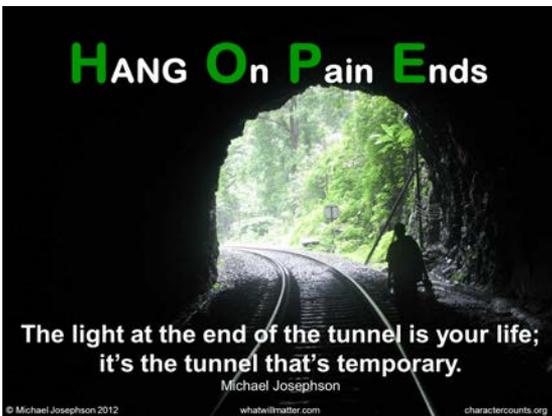
These questions above were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions from November 1969 through September 1971.

Articles

We Agnostics

We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power.

To one who feels she is an atheist or agnostic such an experience seems impossible, but to continue as she is means disaster, especially if she is an alcoholic of the hopeless variety. To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis are not always easy alternatives to face.



But it isn't so difficult. About half our original fellowship were of exactly that type. At first some of us tried to avoid the issue, hoping against hope we were not true alcoholics. But after a while we had to face the fact that we must find a spiritual basis of life. Perhaps it is going to be that way with you. But cheer up, something like half of

us thought we were atheists or agnostics. Our experience shows that you need not be disconcerted.

If a mere code of morals or a better philosophy of life were sufficient to overcome alcoholism, many of us would have recovered long ago. But we found that such codes and philosophies did not save us, no matter how much we tried. We could wish to be moral, we could wish to be philosophically comforted, in fact, we could will these things with all our might, but the needed power wasn't there. Our human resources, as marshalled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly.

Lack of power, that was our dilemma. we had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?

Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main objective is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself that will help you solve your problem. And it means, of course, that we are going to talk about God. Here difficulty arises with agnostics. Many times we talk to a new woman and watch her hope rise as we discuss her alcoholic problems and explain our fellowship. But her face falls when we speak of spiritual matters, especially when we mention God, for we have reopened a subject that our woman thought she had neatly evaded or entirely ignored.

We know how she feels. We have shared her honest doubt and anxiety.

Much to our relief, we discovered we did not need to consider another's conception of God. Our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient. As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps. We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Her.



When we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God. This applies, too, to other spiritual expressions that you find in this book.

We needed to ask ourselves but one short question: "Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?" As soon as a woman can say that she does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure her that she is on her way.

She has come to all who have honestly sought Her. When we drew near to Her, She disclosed Herself to us!

To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open to all.

A Simple Program for Complicated People Living by the Dictates of my Conscience.

— Rick R.

Desperation has been the great motivator for me with respect to the thoroughness that I have applied since the day I surrendered and came to *Alcoholics Anonymous* (A.A.) searching for solutions to my, out of control, drinking problem. Not everyone that comes to A.A. has that degree of desperation That I believe is the difference in the various degrees of success we, as individuals, have when it comes to abstaining from alcohol.

The reality is that not everyone gets it on their very first attempt. With time, comes understanding. Once I got beyond the initial stages of recovery it became clear to me that alcohol did not cause my problems although it eventually become a problem. My mental and emotional troubles started surfacing long before I ever started drinking. I now realize that the drinking masked most of my mental and emotional difficulties for a long time.



But, as it happens, my tolerance for alcohol started to dissipate and the heavy drinking became an obvious problem. I failed at marriage, jobs, friendships, parenthood, and trust with just about every one that knew me. I burned so many bridges that, finally, I had no place to turn. By some miracle, I woke up one morning, and with no other options, I desperately called A.

A. for help. I was finally ready and from that day on, over fifty-three years ago, I have never wanted a drink since then.

The obsession to drink has never showed its face again but had I not recognized the reason that drinking seemed to work, in the early days. The mental and emotional problems would be exposed when I stopped drinking and would need to

be addressed if I was ever going to be at peace with myself and with the world around me.

I feel fortunate that, from that very first day, I have not been in denial about my condition. I have embraced, what I recognized to be, the solution to my disease and the pathway to a future of the contentment that I enjoy today as the result of that thoroughness that I have applied to every facet of my life. I had to relearn how to be a husband, a father, a brother, a friend, an employee, a neighbor, a partner, and a citizen. I had to become an asset and not a liability.

I had to question my motives for everything I did and assure that I stayed on the unselfish side of the ledger. I found it helpful to revisit the spirit of the things that I learned as a child in Church, in School, and in the Boy Scouts. I apply them where the selfish and dishonest habits had ruled my life. I came to understand how my *Ego* had taken over all my mental properties and I had to let my *Conscience* slowly regain control of my virtues.

The A.A. program was there when I was ready to throw in the towel. It helped me to recognize all of these changes but it doesn't go into detail about how to meet these noble goals of how to be a good husband, father, and friend. I had to learn from other experienced sources, the details of these neglected issues. I had to go about



reprogramming my inner self to incorporate all these components of right living. These things take time. They do not happen overnight, but I could not let that stop me from beginning this new journey and giving me a purpose for living.

I am extremely grateful that the A.A. program was established just in time to be available to save this broken spirit and turn it into the person that I am today as I override my *Ego* and simply live by the dictates of my *Conscience*.

Can An Atheist Recover?

—Raj K.

According to Step 12, a spiritual awakening is the result of the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. But is it possible to be spiritual and still be an atheist or agnostic. Or are our doors closed to suffering alcoholics who are non-believers?



When I first stumbled into the rooms of A.A. I considered myself to be an agnostic and being an alcoholic of the *intellectual* persuasion, I needed rational arguments in order to believe. I couldn't muster a real belief in God, but I also couldn't explain the effect that a higher power was having on arresting alcoholism in the stories I was hearing. I came to two realizations that helped me eventually get past it. First of all, a belief rather

than any particular belief was the important common thread in recovery. Second, was that perhaps it was the language and practice of spirituality, evolved over thousands of years, which gave us the tools to observe, describe, and manage the inner workings of our minds.

After several months of having a regular meditation practice, one day during meditation, I finally felt the presence of God! Even for a skeptic like me, the experience was real and undeniable. Since that day, I consider myself to have had a spiritual awakening. While I have not resolved the dilemma of who created the universe, I don't believe that the question is relevant to my concept of a personal God and that I would not be intellectually honest if I denied what I felt in meditation. Today my spirituality continues to evolve and I continue to receive answers to some of life's questions and, through my belief, the strength to implement them.

After admitting to our inner most selves that we are powerless over alcohol, and that no-matter how hard we tried to have power over our lives, we didn't, we had to find something that could have power over every aspect of our lives. By being beat up and totally surrendering, we give up our old ideas and allow something else to work on our alcoholism and our relationships. This is a spiritual program and I tapped into a power that I call God. For some people it may first become an AA group in which they take direction from. Some can admit that the ocean is more powerful than they are, and they start praying to it. Wherever we start, as long as we start, a dramatic change will take place in our lives.

Restore my Sanity

—Garrett D.

For me, as I go through the day with actions and conversations, I am made fully aware that I am allowing my higher power to change me. To restore my sanity. But that is the key, though. To allow change to occur. This is not a process in which we ever take back control of our lives. We've done that for too long with terrible consequences. And by going to meetings and seeing a greater power working in people's lives with awesome results, I gained hope that surrendering and turning my life over is the only way to get well. Little did I know the true effect that just believing in a power greater than myself would have.



So if you're having troubles with this step, just trust that this process works.

Just know that there are powers greater than you and those powers are working in people's lives all around you every time you step into an A.A. meeting. Understanding this step will put hope in your heart.

Special Event

SANTA CLARA COUNTY INTERGROUP 2023 PRESENTS

15th Annual

Chili Cook-off

DATE & TIME

Saturday, February 25th
11:00 - 2:00 PM

LOCATION

Lincoln Glenn Church
2700 Booksin Ave San Jose, CA



CONTESTANTS:

BRING THE HEAT!

TROPHY Winners & **BRAGGING**
Rights! For the

Best Homegroup

Chili Teams

1ST, 2ND, 3RD Place



ATTENDEES:

YOU BE THE JUDGE!

- Doors open at 11 AM
- Suggested donation \$10.
- Sample & vote for your favorite chili
- Enjoy cornbread, dessert, coffee
- Get to know your fellowship
- Fantastic AA speaker meeting

Register TODAY!!!!

Space is limited to the first
twenty groups that register

Each group will receive \$75 for supplies

To register a chili team or volunteer
contact: Gary M. or Central Office
(408)889-1001

SIGNUP TODAY!

Writing for the COIN

Q: Who writes the COIN articles?

A: You do.

This is a publication forum for your personal stories celebrating sobriety and recovery. We welcome your stories, opinion pieces, learnings, questions, thoughts and ideas.

Q: What about Quality?

A: Don't worry about that.

There is nothing more powerful than one alcoholic speaking with and supporting another alcoholic. Indeed, most of us never trusted a professional about our drinking. How could they possibly know about our drinking? But I believe other alcoholics. We are amateurs by design. So never worry about whether what you write is good enough. Just speak from the heart with honesty.

Q: What about sketches, photos, art and flyers?

A: Yes, please!

These are all welcomed and appreciated. We want to give A.A. members a chance to publish their original artwork and photos. We are not a glum lot and love humor, so please send in jokes and cartoons as well. We want the COIN to have a comprehensive listing of all upcoming events and flyers; email your event info as early as possible.

Q: What do I write about?

A: There are monthly newsletter topics that can be found in the COIN.

Each month's topic is Step X, the Principle behind Step X, and Tradition X, where X is the number of the month. January=1 and December=12. For example, January's topics are Step One, Honesty, and Tradition One. Stories about a month's holidays or historic events are also accepted. For example, articles pertaining to a new year/new start in January, relationships and romance in February, stories about the founding of A.A. in June, independence in July, gratitude and giving thanks in November, etc. can all be fitting subject matter.

Write your stories in the first person (using "I" statements). Share your sobriety experience, strength, and hope: the wisdom you've gleaned, the mistakes you've made, the fun, the troubles, and humor you've found in recovery.

If you hear something at a meeting that makes you see things in a different light, write about it. If you have stayed sober through a difficult experience, write about it. Help us teach and learn from each other. Most importantly, help carry the message of A.A.

Q: What are the submission deadlines?

A: Deadlines are published in each month's COIN.

If you miss the deadline, you may still send materials, but they may be saved for inclusion in a future COIN publication. Stories and art are published at the discretion of the COIN editor and the Central Office.

Q: What are the style guidelines?

A: We strive for consistency.

We accept writings from a variety of authors, then, edit them for style, length less than 900 words, correct spelling, fonts, and more. It is challenging to publish each issue in a timely manner. As editors, we do not change the message.

If you can follow some style guidelines, that would help us out a lot. Below is a non-exhaustive list of basic style guidelines.

1. Break all articles into several paragraphs, instead of one big paragraph.
2. Avoid long run-on sentences.
3. Use "A.A." and not "AA"
4. For each article, the first mention of "The Big Book" must state the full name of the book underlined as in Alcoholics Anonymous (The Big Book) or The Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous). Same for 12 & 12.

Q: Anything else?

A: Yes.

Please keep the Twelve Traditions of A.A. in mind as you write. Take special care to respect other members' anonymity. Have fun!

Send your submissions to: coin@asaanjose.org



Santa Clara County Central Office of A.A.

274 E. Hamilton Ave, Suite D

Campbell, CA 95008

**Open 6 days a week for in-person
book and literature sales, and more.**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Sunday: Closed



Details, Map, Calendar, Holiday Closings, and More:

<https://aasanjose.org/central-office>

408 889-1001 • aasanjose@comcast.net