

INTO ACTION

CONFIDENTIAL
August/September
2011

*Step eight...the beginning of the end of isolation
from our fellows and from God.
(I have a right to make spiritual progress.)*

**Step 8:
Made a list of all persons we
had harmed and became
willing to make amends to
them all.**



**I ask:
Who did I hurt?
How can I fix it?**
(From: 12 Steps Illustrated-
P55)

I CHOSE this Step to write about because it's the toughest one for me. I've had one hell of a time with the state of willingness. For, in order to be willing to make amends to others, you must first forgive yourself and be ready to make amends to yourself. And I am just beginning to see this in broad daylight. Formerly, I was half-aware that I had not really forgiven myself. **It was what I call the gauze-curtain, awareness; you see the problem dimly, as if through a veil, but you can't really formulate it. I think that many of us in AA have a hard**

time with self-acceptance. And the result is misery, whether it takes the form of repeated slips, depressions or psychosomatic illness, or failure in business or human relationships.

The other night, in our local discussion group, we batted this around a little. Somebody said that the first seven Steps lead into the Eighth. The surrender, the arrival at faith, the inventory all help us to forgive ourselves and gain enough self-respect and insight to be able to make amends and really mean it. Someone else said that joining AA and being sober were the biggest amends we could make.

I go right along with this, of course. In the years that I have been in AA, life has indeed been more manageable. Often, it has been very good. I've made a lot of wonderful friends. I've had a lot of fun. I've been able to help new people, and the rewards for this effort are unending. But every so often I used to get back into moods of self-debasement. "It's hopeless," I'd say to myself. "I simply cannot work this program; I can't stay put."

The poet Samuel Hoffenstein said, "**Wherever I go, I take me along and spoil everything.**" Really, during those long moods of depression, I felt that I was walking across a mountain range in a snowstorm without a handkerchief. But throughout each time, I'd keep saying to myself, "I've gotten this far, and I'm not going to give up. I'm not going to get drunk. I'm going to find out what causes it, if it's the last thing I do."
(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from the front page)

So I kept trying. From the very beginning, I made all the amends I could, all the way from sending someone a green branch sewn all over with ripe black olives to calling an amende on the telephone in Paris, when I was over there a couple of years ago. This apology was for something that had happened thirty-one years before. It was accepted, everything was beautiful. . . . Only it wasn't.

I now know that I was hung up on the Puritan mystique: Sin is unforgivable; you're going to be punished forever. Other people's forgiveness, their loving forgiveness, the friendship of people in AA and not in AA who loved me and whom I loved--all this was unavailing. I was making myself into a special case; down deep, I believed I was beyond redemption. It went back beyond all the sordid, unsavory, tawdry, illicit, and ridiculous behavior of my drinking days. It went 'way back into childhood. I now see that nobody was to blame. I am learning to release this childhood conditioning and the insecurity that contributed to my alcoholism. The people who brought me up had hang-ups, too. The God of my understanding, whom I found in AA, is not a punishing, revengeful God at all. I have begun to make friends with Him and thus with myself.

Thank God, I have a mind that is capable of learning and is willing to learn. Thank God for what must be over a thousand AA meetings by now and for every word uttered by every speaker. I have always learned something. I'm lucky in my AA friends. Hundreds of evenings of talk, several reservoirs full of hot coffee, truckloads of cream, carloads of sugar, ideas enough to fill all the shelves in the Library of Congress. Love and understanding of a kind that would quickly bring peace on earth if it were generally shared. When I look back, I can see that while I was walking across Snow Mountain, sniffing and hating myself, I never once walked alone. Thank God for professional help, too. I needed it, so I went and got it. Psychiatry is not a dirty word to me. After all, if I gashed my finger, I'd be in a doctor's office in ten minutes!

It has finally penetrated my head and my heart that I have a right to make spiritual progress. I have a right to be emotionally mature. I have a right to take pleasure in my own company, and that makes me more pleasant to be with. I have a right to become

willing--deeply willing, entirely willing--to make amends to all those whom I have harmed. **Because I can now accept myself the way I am, I can accept other people the way they are--not entirely, but to a much greater degree than in the past.** My early amends were efforts to reinstate myself, to win back approval. My intolerance and anger were always followed by crawling apology. I had an insatiable need for other people's approval. Now, when apology is in order, my first concern is to make the other person happy. I come second.

I deserve *not* to be as self-centered as somebody with a terrible toothache. I deserve to have the grace to laugh at myself. To me, all this is part of the amends business; I wish I could reach out to every single one of you who are having a bad time with yourselves. I wish I could put the answer right into your hands like a present in a package. I can't quite do that. But perhaps this piece has given you a clue, a signpost, a hope, and a start along the road that you want to follow.

F. M.*New Canaan, Connecticut

This is from a series on the Twelve Steps and was written by twelve members of A.A., each interpreting one of the Steps as he sees it.

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Vol. 27 No. 8

Northern Illinois Area Area 20 Fall Election Assembly September 17, 2011

**Location: Faith Walk World
Outreach Center
1450 Avenue of the Cities
Silvis, IL 61282**

Registration begins: 8:00 A.M.

Meeting begins: 9:00 A.M.

Lunch will be served, \$8.00

Hosted by: District 90

Information Contact:

Randy F. 309-738-3517

refitzgerald@msn.com

INTOACTION Editorial Policy

INTOACTION News is a bimonthly newsletter of District 11; NIA 20 of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by and for the Members of the Fellowship of AA. Opinions expressed herein are NOT to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by AA. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are reprinted with permission from AA World Service, Inc. and/or The AA Grapevine; Inc. Submissions are edited for space and clarity ONLY. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected.

**Twelve Traditions;
an Explanation**

"The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are a distillate of our experience of living and working together. They apply the spirit of the Twelve recovery Steps to our group life and security. They deal with the world outside and with each other; They state our attitudes toward power and prestige, Toward property and money. They would save us from tempting alliances and major controversies; they would elevate principles far above personal ambitions. And as a token of this last, they request that we maintain personal anonymity before the open public as a protection to AA and as proof of the fact that our society intends to practice true humility."

Bill W., The Language of the Heart, pg. 96

THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF IA IS SEPTEMBER 24TH, 2011.
THE THEME FOR THE Oct/Nov - 2011 ISSUE of INTOACTION IS; *Personal Inventory - Step 10, or anything you wish to submit.*

INTOACTION: District 11's Newsletter
 Editor: David Gilbert 815-344-6523
 E-mail: Soulsurgery@comcast.net

District 11's G.S.R.
 Meetings Are Held
 On 1st Thursday of
 the Month at the
 McHenry Alano Club;
 409 Front Street-Unit D
 (route 31) McHenry, IL



District Meeting 7:30 PM

DISTRICT 11's WEB SITE:↓

<http://www.aa-nia-dist11.org>

DISTRICT 11 SECRETARY:↓

aadistrict11sec@yahoo.com

SOBERFEST WEB SITE:↓

<http://www.soberfest.org/>

NIA 20 EVENTS WEB SITE:↓

<http://www.aa-nia.org/events.html>

Live Links

****SCHEDULE INFO CHANGES:**

PLEASE E-MAIL Bill J. ~ ~ EMAIL to:
schedulemaker@ymail.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

From Group (Name) _____
 Group #: _____
 Dist. #: _____
 Meeting City: _____

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The General Service Office
 AAWS
 P.O. Box 459
 Grand Central Station
 New York, NY 10163-0459

Mail Contributions To:

Illinois State 2011 Conference

August 5th, 6th, 7th

Hosted by Area 19

Holiday Inn North Shore
 5300 West Touhy Avenue,
 Skokie, IL –

Bill W 312-206-0642
bwalk2009@att.net

Monthly Meeting Minutes for District 11 July 7th, 2011

(Editor's Note: Dates and times contained in the following minutes are a reflection from the minutes taken on July 7th, 2011 not the date of this publication. (SOME UPDATES ARE NOTED- THX)

Meeting Time: 7:30 PM

Attendance: 23

Committee Members 8

Groups Represented: 14

Anniversaries none

Congratulation on all anniversaries

Secretary's Report: Glen R (Terry G alt.)

Written committee report forms must be submitted to the secretary to be included in the minutes. The new E-Mail for the secretary is aadistrict11sec@yahoo.com .

Treasurer's Report: Mark J (alt Eric J)

Beginning balance 5897.64

Income 809.53

Expenses 901.78

Ending balance 5805.39

This is May's balance no new update were available for June

DCM's Report: Brandon L (alt David G)

DCM REPORT

July 7, 2011

Hello to All!

I happily attended the spring assembly in Rockford on June 18th. I was extremely pleased to get a handful of GSR's and committee's members there from our district. I think only one GSR from district 11 lasted all the way to the end with me but it was great to see you all there. With 15 motions, it was a long day but we did the work for our area asked of us. I hope to see you all and more from district 11 at the fall assembly on September 17th in Silvis.

Our district will be hosting the summer committee meeting at Lord of Life Church in La Fox on August 13th.

Service? Woohoo!

I need to get 6 volunteers to help there and I think I have already secured one so I am in need of 5. We will all need to be there at 7:30am the day of the meeting. I make it from Crystal Lake in about 45 minutes. We will be making coffee, setting up, assisting with registration, serving breakfast snacks, lunch, and cleaning up after.

District 11 asks their DCM to attend the Illinois State Conference. I am very excited about the program Chicago Area is planning but I have a prior obligation to attend on Saturday. My hope is going to the conference, take care of my commitment Saturday, and then hurry back to the conference to share the experience with all of you. It looks like it will be a great time and an excellent chance to spend some time with GSO staff. A few of the people to be there are Pam R., our East Central Regional trustee; Rev. Ward E., Chairman of the General Service Board; and Phyllis H, GSO's General Manager. I find it kind of exciting but maybe I am an AA nerd of sorts.

I have received an invitation and fliers from GSO for our East Central Regional Forum on November 11-13th in Miamsiburg, Ohio. This is another event that I am asked to attend as DCM and am looking forward to. I have been asked by GSO to ask all AA group members in District 11 and especially GSR's to attend the forum. "At Regional Forums, AA members in our whole region and in your own district have the chance to hear more about the wider world of AA. This is an opportunity for members who attend the Forum to exchange group, district, and regional experience with the representatives of the General Service Office, the Grapevine, the General Service Board, as well as other AA members who attend." There should be fliers on the table. I would encourage all to attend. Let me know if you are thinking of going and maybe we can car pool or find some way to make it easier on all.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service,

Brandon Long

DCM (District Committee Member)

NIA 20 - District 11(Northern Illinois Area 20)

(Continued from page 4)

Public Information Report Nick (alt Brian B)

We received our literature from GSO, and turned receipts in to mark. Looking into buying some grapevine subscription for some police stations, doctor offices etc.

Hospital & Treatment Report Mike R (alt Dave R)

Treatment committee meeting sat July 16th Woodstock 231 main, looking for new alternate & btg coordinator

Corrections Report: Chuck L, (alt Gene S)

No report

CPC Report: John S: (alt Nate P)

No report

Answering service Fred G chair (alt Mitch P)

Total calls 89-- 54 meeting info, 2 open meetings 14 to speak with AA member, 0 NA, 1 treatment info 3 - 12 step calls 2 out of district, 4 al-anon 5 needed ride, 6 al-anon info 0-10 min 74, 13-20 min 14, 2 -30 min 0 over 30 min 0

Archives Report: Clarence J, (alt open)

No report

Grapevine Report: Jessica W, (alt Brad B)

Grapevine board to be set up at July 9th sponsorship workshop, continuing to replenish pamphlets and forms

Special Needs Report: Pat C, (alt Chuck d)

We attended NIA area summer assembly in June in Rockford, break out group we discussed changes to NIA website. Handicap assessable check list will be added to special needs committee responsibility list.

LCM Report: John F, (alt open) \

No report

Workshop Report: Craig C, (alt Sue C)

No report

UPDATED

Newsletter Report: Dave G , (ATL - OPEN)

The Aug/Sept issue of our news letter. **INTO ACTION** IS out. The deadline for the October/November issue is September 24th and the topic is Personal Inventory – Step 10; or anything you wish. Share your personal or your group's experience, strength and hope and events or news.

Webmaster Report: Chuck T

No report

Schedule Maker Report: Bill J.

No report

Old Business:

No report

New Business

Looking for volunteers for summer committee meeting, thanks to Carol, Pat Jessica and Lynn for stepping up.

Upcoming Events UPDATED

Open Mic

Carol the flying geese are looking for sponsors and /or sponsees for round table discussing July 9th at the workshop

Nick hope factory are working with district 22 to co-host a workshop July 30th entitled "young people in service" location and times to be determined.

UP-COMING EVENTS – UPDATED

- **08/06 22nd McHenry Soberfest Al-Anon Fundraiser:** Saturday, August 6, \$5.00, Doors Open at 5:00pm, McHenry Township Hall, Rte.31 & Johnsburg Road. **SPEAKERS at 6:45 – Dave and Janet D. Go to www.soberfest.org**
- **08/05-07 39th Illinois State Conference hosted by Area 19 (Chicago),** August 5-7, 2011 at the Holiday Inn North Shore in Skokie, Bill W. 312-206-0642

➤ **August 13 - Summer Committee Meeting**
Hosted by District 11,

Lord of Life Church,
40W605 IL Rte 38 @ La
Fox Rd, La Fox, IL.

To Volunteer call our DCM;

Brandon 815-219-1667

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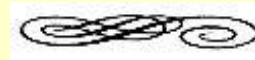
- **08/21 Public Information Workshop**, Hosted by Districts 43 & 62, 2pm-5pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 3000 Liberty Street, Aurora, IL 60502
- **09/02-05 53rd ICYPAA**, SF Marriott Marquis, 55 4th St, San Francisco, CA, chair@icypaahost.org
- **09/09-11 West Central Regional Forum**, Clarion Hotel & Conference Ctr, 5202 Brady St, Davenport, IA, 563-391-1230, G.S.O. 212-870-3400, www.aa.org
(Continued from the previous page)
- **09/17 Fall Assembly** hosted by District 90, The Faith Walk Outreach Center, 1450 Colona Road, East Moline, (1450 Avenue of the Cities, Silvis, IL 61282, Randy F. 309-738-3517) IL. Bruce 309-792-2493
- **09/17 All Chicago Open**, UIC Pavilion, Racine & Harrison, Chicago, IL, Open 6:00 pm, meeting 8:00 pm
- **09/24 11th Annual A Way Out Anniversary Party, Fellowship & Food 6:00 pm, Speaker 7:30 pm**, Civic Center, 135 W Church St, Libertyville, IL, Ken 847-276-1272
- **10/29 NIA Big Book Conference** hosted by District 71, Hickory Grove Conference & Banquet Ctr, 1133 N 7th St (Rte 38 & US251), Rochelle, IL, Debe 815-501-1542 onedebe@gmail.com or Tracy 815-739-5412
- **10/22 Jack O Memorial Dinner**, Atlantis Banquets Ctr, 1273 N Rand Rd, Arlington Hts, IL 60004, Carl 847-431-5554 cman123@comcast.net

UPDATED

**** The next district meeting will be held on Thursday September 1st, 2011
Respectfully Submitted, Glen Reid, Secretary, Terry G. alt secretary

Sometimes the only thing we don't have enough of is the realization that we already have more than enough to be happy. Happiness is not a condition, it is a choice, and just as we can choose to be patient and charitable and strong, we can choose to be happy, too, no matter how little of anything we may think we have. May you always realize you have enough to be content.

Al-Anon @ Soberfest 22nd Annual FunRaiser



Saturday August 6th 2011

Doors Open @ 5 pm
Speakers @ 6:45 pm

McHenry Township Hall
Route 31 & Johnsburg Rd.

Raffle Prizes • Alateen Bake Sale
Silent Auction • Food • Dancing
Lots of Food and Fun!

Speakers:
Dave & Janet D.
Of Spring Grove, IL.

Admission \$5.⁰⁰

For More Info:
Kim M. 815-3544565
Mona W. 815-745-3901
Kim U. 815-236-3823

For more Info on
Soberfest Go To:
www.soberfest.org

The Soberfest Planning Committee meets,
usually every other Wednesday at the
McHenry Township Building at 7:30pm.

[Next to the Design For Living Mtg.]

Our next meeting is Aug. 17th.
REGISTER ON-LINE

OR Volunteer
www.soberfest.org
Grand Geneva Resort
888-392-8000

Mention
SOBERFEST
when getting a
room to get the
discount.
GET YOUR
ROOM
EARLY ;-)

Forgiveness

To Guard Against A Slip

52 - As Bill See's It.

Suppose we fall short of our chosen ideals and stumble? Does this mean we are going to get drunk? Some people tell us so. But this is only a half-truth.

It depends on us and on our motives. If we are sorry for what we have done, and have the honest desire to let God take us to better things, we believe we will be forgiven and will have learned our lesson. If we are not sorry, and our conduct continues to harm others, we are quite sure to drink. These are facts out of our experience.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 70

Reviewing the Day

89 - As Bill Sees It

When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid? Do we owe an apology? Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better? Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life?

We must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse, or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to ourselves and to others. After making our review, we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 86

Start by Forgiving

151 - As Bill Sees It

The moment we ponder a twisted or broken relationship with another person, our emotions go on the defensive. To escape looking at the wrongs we have done another, we resentfully focus on the wrong he has done us. Triumphantly we seize upon his slightest misbehavior as the perfect excuse for minimizing or forgetting our own.

Right here we need to fetch ourselves up sharply. Let's remember that alcoholics are not the only ones bedeviled by sick emotions. In many instances we are really dealing with fellow sufferers, people whose woes we have increased.

If we are about to ask forgiveness for ourselves, why shouldn't we start out by forgiving them, one and all?
TWELVE AND TWELVE, p. 78

The Building of Character

204 - As Bill Sees It

Since most of us are born with an abundance of natural desires, it isn't strange that we often let these far exceed their intended purpose. When they drive us blindly, or we willfully demand that they supply us with more satisfactions or pleasures than are possible or due us, that is the point at which we depart from the degree of perfection that God wishes for us here on earth. That is the measure of our character defects, or, if you wish, of our sins.

If we ask, God will certainly forgive our derelictions. But in no case does He render us white as snow and keep us that way without our cooperation. That is something we are supposed to be willing to work toward ourselves. He asks only that we try as best we know how to make progress in the building of character.

TWELVE AND TWELVE, p. 65

Those Other People

268- As Bill Sees It

"Just like you, I have often thought myself the victim of what other people say and do. Yet every time I confessed the sins of such people, especially those whose sins did not correspond exactly with my own, I found that I only increased the total damage. My own resentment, my self-pity would often render me well-nigh useless to anybody.

"So, nowadays, if anyone talks of me so as to hurt, I first ask myself if there is any truth at all in what they say. If there is none, I try to remember that I too have had my periods of speaking bitterly of others; that hurtful gossip is but a symptom of our remaining emotional illness; and consequently that I must never be angry at the unreasonableness of sick people.

(Continued on the next page)

(Continued from page 7)

"Under very trying conditions I have had, again and again, to forgive others - also myself. Have you recently tried this?"

LETTER, 1946

Forgiveness

318 - As Bill Sees It

Through the vital Fifth Step, we began to get the feeling that we could be forgiven, no matter what we had thought or done.

Often it was while working on this Step with our sponsors or spiritual advisers that we first felt truly able to forgive others, no matter how deeply we felt they had wronged us.

Our moral inventory had persuaded us that all-round forgiveness was desirable, but it was only when we resolutely tackled Step Five that we inwardly knew we'd be able to receive forgiveness and give it, too.

TWELVE AND TWELVE, pp. 57-58

Thanks ♥-Contributing Groups Since January - Thanks ♥-

125619 Mon Luncheon
Crystal Lake
127053 Richmond Monday
Night
132066 - Christ the King
141413 Serenity Group
150979 Clean Air Closed
Discussion
151333 Big Book
156474 Happy Hour Group
480005 Thur. Night St.
Paul's
558985 Nooner's
610896 Winners & Beginners
637197 12&12 Group
637908 Flying Geese
637909 Big Book 10 am
643018 Freedom Farm
Campfire
653347 Fri 6 pm Big Book
653426 Harvard AA Club
654091 Design for Living
655136 Growth & Change
Men's
657318 12 Steps 12 Tradition
657318 Discussion
657321 Monday Big Book -
Huntley
658742 Sun am Big Book
659638 Tuesday Riverside G
666210 Thur. 8am MAC

672942 Thurs Priority
Big Book
673489 Unknown Gp
67444 Sunday Noon
Faith Community
678873 KIS - Weds
Night Men's
688362 Not a Glum
Lot
689268 Monday Night
Big Book
691818 We are not a
Glum Lot
694876 Sun Big Book
MAC
695658 Into Action
Wanderers
697228 Hope Factory
698008 Wed Night
Wanderers Group
699065 Men's Priority
Big Book
CLAC Monday 10 am
Big Book
CLAC Tuesday 10 am
MAC - Sunday 11 am
Men's Step Meeting,
Sat St Mary'
Wanders 34Z
Wanders 26
Tuesday 10 am 12x12
CLAC

Heard Around the Tables District 11's Wisdom and Witticisms

- ❖ We get a *daily* reprieve, based on what we do *today* for our recovery.
 - ❖ Learn how to listen, and you will profit even from those who speak badly.
 - ❖ I've learned that I can't always control my thoughts but today I don't have to let my thoughts control me.
 - ❖ I told myself that when it got "that bad", I'd do something about it. Then I found myself in the middle of "that bad" and I couldn't do anything about it.
 - ❖ "We absolutely insist on enjoying life."
(Big Book - Page 132, 17th line down - 17th line up)
 - ❖ "The attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of AA's Twelve Steps. For without some degree of humility, no alcoholic can stay sober at all." 12X12, p. 70
 - ❖ Losers make promises;
Winners make commitments.
 - ❖ When climbing a steep hill, a man is often more conscious of the weakness of his stumbling feet than of the view, the grandeur, or even of his upward progress.
 - ❖ After being in and out of these rooms, I have found that it is better for me to be sitting in a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous wanting a drink than it is for me to be sitting in a bar wanting to be sober.
 - ❖ God doesn't make junk!
 - ❖ I'm proof God recycles!
 - ❖ One Day At A Time, One Hour At A Time, One Minute At A Time, One Breathe At A Time, all adds up to, "In A Row".
 - ❖ Forgive Yourself First - God Already Has.
- ### On Rule 62
- ❖ A pessimist sees the glass as half empty, an optimist sees the glass as half full, an economist sees the glass as too large, an engineer see the glass twice as big as it ought to be an alcoholic sees the glass as pointless.
"Those who think they know it all; are really annoying to those of us who do!" ☺
 - ❖ 'Life isn't like a bowl of cherries or peaches, it's more like a jar of Jalapenos--what you do today, might burn your butt tomorrow.....'
 - ❖ Changing the toilet paper roll does not cause cancer.