



DISTRICT 4, AREA 15

Sara-Mana InterGroup Newsletter

August 2024

A.A.'S **TWELVE STEPS** ARE PRINCIPLES FOR PERSONAL RECOVERY.

STEP 8

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

THE **TWELVE TRADITIONS** ENSURE THE UNITY OF THE FELLOWSHIP.

TRADITION 8

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

THE **TWELVE CONCEPTS** FOR WORLD SERVICE PROVIDE A GROUP OF RELATED PRINCIPLES TO HELP ENSURE THAT VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF A.A.'S SERVICE STRUCTURE REMAIN RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE TO THOSE THEY SERVE.

CONCEPT 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.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Angie S., District IV General Service Chair

Recently, it was my honor to interview our District IV General Service Chairperson, Angie S. While I've known Angie for about a year and a half, I never REALLY knew her until now. Let's get to know her together, a lady with a little voice but a big presence.

Angie has been sober for an incredible 35 years! She started service work early in her recovery, as a greeter and ashtray washer in her Kentucky home group. She quickly moved to Intergroup Representative, host committee work for Area 26, and then Host Committee Chair for her local Convention. When I expressed some confusion, she explained that the service structures were organized a little differently in Kentucky.

After joining a new home group, she stood for and was appointed GSR for that group as they did not have one. She went on to serve as the local district Newsletter Chair, Alternate District Committee Member (ACM), then DCM for District XII, where she reported on her district at the Area meetings. This position (in Kentucky) was similar to the one that she holds today in our own District IV. Following this, she became Secretary for Area 26 for two years, then Newsletter Chair for Area 26 for two more years and then Alternate Chair for Area 26 for another two years.

As soon as she moved to Florida, she got busy in District IV, first by becoming Alternate GSR for her new home group, Kensington Park. Angie was serving as DCM for Sub-District 4 when Covid happened and everything changed. She transitioned to Zoom meetings until we returned to meeting in person. At that time, she became the Alternate Chair for District IV, and followed that by assuming the position that she currently holds, District IV General Service Chair.

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SARA-MANA CENTRAL OFFICE

1748 Independence Boulevard
Suite G-2
Sarasota, FL 34234
941-351-4818
www.aasrq.org

HOURS:

Monday-Thursday, 9am-4pm
Closed: Fridays, Weekends, & Holidays

24 HOUR HELPLINE 941-951-6810

ENGLISH: Press 1 **SPANISH:** Press 2





Longtimer's Corner

What is your name?

My name is Quay H.

What is your sobriety date?

Sept 29, 1985

Where did you first get sober?

I left NYC at age 30 to get sober in Albany NY.

What was the name of your first home group?

The One Day At A Time Group, a Clubhouse in Albany that hosted 19 meetings per week.

What were meetings like when you first got sober?

The meetings were full of mostly middle-aged, working class, white men. They were serious about getting and staying sober, with tough love, hope, patience, and tolerance, and without judgment.

How long did it take before you got a sponsor?

It took a month or two for me to ask someone to sponsor me.

Did you stay after your first meeting or did you go out and do more research?

I have been sober since my first meeting, nearly 39 years ago. I went to at least one meeting every day for my first 10 years.

When did you move to Florida?

I retired from state government in July of 2016 and moved here in January 2017.

What was it like to make the adjustment to going to meetings after you moved?

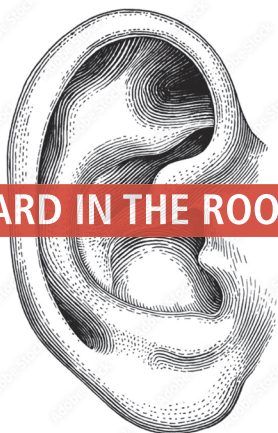
I started with a 90 in 90, which turned into 6 months of daily meetings. I went to different ones all over Sarasota and Bradenton, raised my hand, and introduced myself as new to the area at each meeting.

How is AA and the 12-Step world different now than it was when you started?

There are more young people and more women. Most people have attended rehabs before coming to AA, so sometimes we need to (re)educate them as to what AA is and what it is not, and how we behave in AA meetings.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

I am, in many ways, unrecognizable from the person who first walked through the doors of AA in 1985. Service has been an important part of my sober life. I started out as a meeting chairperson, treasurer, GSR (General Service Representative), DCM (District Committee Member), District and Area CPC (Cooperation with the Professional Community) Chair, Area Chair, Area Delegate, and have served on various committees, including the CPC committee, the Corrections committee, the PI (Public Information) committee, the Area Finance committee, and the Web Ad-Hoc committee. I have taken meetings into prisons (including Green Haven maximum security prison, Greene Correctional Facility in Coxsackie NY for 8 years, Summit Shock incarceration facility for 3 years), and served as guest speaker and chair of several Area, State, and Regional Conventions. These commitments have helped me be visible, accountable, and in the middle of the herd, doing God's work. Early on, my sponsor told me that the surest, quickest way to a Higher Power was through service. It's the least I can do for the life I have been given. My heart is full.



HEARD IN THE ROOMS

Serenity is saying "yes" without resentment and saying "no" without guilt.



Come and learn about Intergroup and enjoy some fellowship along with FREE PIZZA! Join us at 6pm on the third Tuesday of August and October, 2024!

SPOTLIGHT, CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE

Angie describes her duties as follows:

- > coordinating the activities of the officers and chairpersons within the District,
- > chairing our monthly meetings
- > keeping everyone on track with advice and information
- > providing training, resources and answers to questions (for the questions that she can't answer herself, she turns to her 'village' of experienced people with knowledge in the workings of all things AA)
- > attending monthly Zoom meetings of all the District Chairs
- > attending Area Quarterly Assemblies, where she reports on District IV to Area 15 to represent the collective will of our members in District IV.

Angie says she does AA service to pay it forward. She wants District IV to be a place where everyone is welcome to express themselves and feel confident that their voices are heard and then represented at Area Assemblies. When she is reporting at the Area Assemblies, Angie assures them that, "We do more in District IV!"

ILAS, Ross J.

Giving Back What Was So Freely Given

I entered my first AA meeting at 25 years old. I knew there was a possibility that I might be an alcoholic but I didn't think I was "bad enough for AA". I was told to get a sponsor who looked like they knew what they were doing and had what I wanted. A week after my very first meeting, a woman came up to me to give me a white chip and a Twelve and Twelve. She had recognized me from the previous week and was one of the first people I met up with outside of a meeting. I did not know much about her or her story but I admired the way she carried herself. She was warm and welcoming and I needed to be shown kindness and love because I had not felt much of that up until that point. I asked her to be my sponsor and she graciously accepted and took me through the work. I didn't really know what the process was going to look like and I hadn't yet fully conceded to my innermost self that I was an alcoholic but I didn't think it would hurt to "try out AA".

Through my experience with her, I have learned what patience, understanding, love, and compassion look like. I've learned how God can work

in someone's life and bring them from the gutter to a beautiful and fulfilling life. She gave space for me to share the darkest parts of my inventory without judgement during the Fifth Step and openly shared her experiences with the same things that had haunted me and caused me to feel like I was broken and unlovable. I once asked her "why are you so nice to me and do all of this for me?" Her response was "you'll have your turn to do the same for other women." I didn't like that response at first because I was still more of a taker than a giver and I thought I had her fooled. As my connection with God grew, my heart started opening and I began to care about other people in AA. I wanted to see them get sober and experience the promises that our program offers us. As I began to understand more about the lethal nature of alcoholism and experience the suffering of dry drunkenness caused by prolonged periods of not working a program, I began to understand that I needed to give back in order to stay alive myself. Today, I see that we do together what we cannot do alone—with the help of God, each other, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

*A Grateful Member
of Our Community*



Wisdom From
Our Literature
For Step 8.

"Though in some cases we cannot make restitution at all, and in some cases action ought to be deferred, we should nevertheless make an accurate and really exhaustive survey of our past life as it has affected other people. In many instances we shall find that though the harm done others has not been great, the emotional harm we have done ourselves has. Very deep, sometimes quite forgotten, damaging emotional conflicts persist below the level of consciousness. At the time of these occurrences, they may actually have given our emotions violent twists which have since discolored our personalities and altered our lives for the worse."

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pp. 79-80

July Anniversaries!



63rd Avenue Group

Paul W 1 year
Bob T 45 years

OMD

Kim G 2 years
Warren L 2 years
Amanda H 7 years
Michael T 20 years
Robert S 31 years
Leslie R 32 years

Gulf Gate Noon

Kurt T 3 years
Mary D 4 years
Spencer D 5 years
Kathy F 7 years
Bill M 25 years
Noreen 36 years
Joe G 41 years
Pat C 45 years

Wednesday Women's Holmes Beach Group

Lori N 6 years
Maureen G 16 years

Wednesday Night

Beginner's Men's Group

Mark S 2 years
Quinn V 4 years
Bob J 5 years
Sam F 23 years
Richard R 30 years
Ted VG 30 years

Oasis Group

Gloria F 34 years

To publish your group members Anniversaries—

submit the month and day along with the total number of years, (ex., Mary S. 1/21, 32 years), via email to newsletter@aaqr.org

A Grateful Alcoholic Doesn't Drink



When I think back to the years before I came to AA, I realize gratitude was a foreign concept to me. Sure, I said thank you to my family for birthday gifts and presents at Christmas, but the actual concept of gratitude, for me today, goes so much deeper. I smile sometimes when the 9th Step Promises are read. "Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly"—well, I am the poster child for slowly. I first came to this program in 1990 and yet will celebrate (me and God willing) 15 years this December. There is a day that stands out in my mind when I think of gratitude. And this happened about 5 years ago.

I was at a beach meeting, and my share was nothing but complaining about the woes of my life. This had been a pattern of mine for years. After I was done vomiting up all my "poor mes," another man shared that his sponsor had required him to make a gratitude list every day. He had to list five things he was grateful for each day for two weeks. And nothing in the previous lists could be repeated. Well, that got my attention. I had reached a point where I was sick of being so whiny and not really gaining anything from recovery, so I tried it. I'll admit, there were days when finding all five things to be grateful for was not an easy task, but I persevered.

I am grateful to that gentleman for his words, and for my own willingness to try something new. I learned how to dig deep within myself and pay attention to life and the gifts I had been given and continue to receive. There is ALWAYS something to be grateful for—my cozy apartment (some folks have no place to hang their hat); my car that gets me where I need to go (many folks have to walk or take a bus). I could go on and on. I have learned to focus on what I have rather than what I don't have. I am not wealthy, but I have people in my life whom I love and who love me back, so I am very rich indeed.

Linda F.