

SOBER TIMES

Iowa District 8 AA Newsletter



UPCOMING EVENTS

(all underlined titles are clickable links to more information)

Foxhall In the Forest, June 7th - June 10th at Pinicon Ridge Group Camp #1, Central City. Campfire mtgs at 7pm Fri and Sat. Sat Speakers are Lyla C (Al-Anon) followed by Phil C (AA). Lots of activities, bring your food, camping gear and lawn chair. More info [here](#).

Area 24 2024 Spring Conference at Dordt College in Sioux Center, IA, June 14th - 16th. More details and registration information can be found [here](#).

An AA Group ("The 808") 12th Anniversary - Saturday, June 22nd from 9:00-5:00 pm at the Fellowship Club, 3224 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. Join us for an all-day Journey through the Big Book presented by Josh H and Jeremy M. Lunch will be provided; bring a snack or dish to share if you'd like. Get a [flyer](#) to help spread the word!

District 8 Treatment & Corrections Workshop - Saturday, June 29, 2024 from 1:00 - 4:30 pm at the Fellowship Club, 3224 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. Learn how to get involved with taking AA into area treatment and corrections facilities. See [flyer](#) for more information.

Fellowship of the Spirit (FOTS) in Estes Park, Colorado is July 25th - 28th. More details can be found [here](#).

National Alcoholics Anonymous Archives Workshop (NAAAW) is September 26 @ 8:00 am - September 29 @ 5:00 pm at Scottish Rite Consistory in Des Moines, IA. More info [here](#).

WORKSHOP - Twelve Concepts of AA - Saturday, August 24, 2024 from 12:00 to 4:30 pm in the Fellowship Club Auditorium, 3224 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. For questions or more information, check out the [flyer](#).

Women Living Spiritually Retreat, Sept 27th - 29th at Crooked Creek Christian Camp, Washington, IA. All the information on the flyer found [here](#).

District 8 Business Meetings - on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm; Unity Center of Cedar Rapids, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. ALL are welcome!

Non-AA related Announcements: 3rd Annual Safe Place Golf Outing - Saturday, May 25, 2024 at Wildcat Golf Course, 100 Wildcat Trail, Shellsburg, IA 52332. To register and for more information, get the flyer [here](#).

Areas We

Serve

Anamosa
Cedar Rapids
Center Point
Central City
Coggon
Garrison
Grinnell
Hale
Keystone
Lisbon
Marion
Monticello
Mount Vernon
Tama
Urbana
Vinton
Walford



Area Clubs

In District 8 there are three clubs which provide space for A.A. meetings, groups, and events. These are not to be considered "A.A. Clubs", but rather "secondary aids" to the A.A. community. We mention them for the sole purpose of providing addresses for these locations. This is not to be considered an endorsement or affiliation, but indicate a relationship of cooperation.

CR GRATITUDE CLUB

212 Edgewood Rd NW, Suite K
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

FELLOWSHIP CLUB

3224 1st Ave NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
319-364-0314

INDUSTRIAL CLUB

225 South 35th St
Marion, IA 52302

Iowa District 8 of Alcoholics

Anonymous Website

<https://www.aa-cedarrapids.org/>



District Meetings

Below are the descriptions and responsibilities for various district positions. This information is taken from the District 8 Job Descriptions, found [here](#). We're providing this information for your knowledge, but also because this is a voting year, and if you're interested in volunteering for one of them, please attend an upcoming District meeting - ALL are welcome!

DISTRICT 8 TREASURER:

Description: The District 8 Treasurer is a member of the executive committee, along with the DCM, Alternate DCM, and Secretary.

Selection and Qualifications Requirements: Must be an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous, with a minimum of two years of continuous sobriety. Elected by the membership of District 8 in even years for a two-year term.

Functions and Responsibilities:

1. Attend monthly business meetings of District 8, and provide a report.
2. Where neither the DCM or the Alternate DCM are present at the District 8 business meeting, the Treasurer should act as Chairperson of said business meeting.
3. Be familiar with the SPJD of the DCM in the event that it is necessary to perform those duties.
4. Is responsible for all financial activities of the District, including accounting of cash receipts and disbursements, District mailbox, maintenance of bank account and reporting of financial results and financial position at monthly district meetings.
5. Weekly Duties:
 - a. Check for incoming mail at the post office on Council Street.
 - b. Forward all correspondence to the appropriate officer or District Chairperson.
 - c. Prepare deposits and send to the bank at Farmer's State Bank.
 - d. Prepare checks for the payment of bills – hotline and literature primarily.
6. Monthly Duties:
 - a. Summarize the cash transactions in the check register.
 - b. Prepare Treasurer's report of transaction.
 - c. Reconcile check register balance with the monthly bank statement.
 - d. Present Treasurer's report at all District meetings.
 - e. Maintain correspondence if any with bank and vendors.
 - f. Reimburse officers and District chair persons for documented expenses incurred.
 - g. Pay monthly rent at the church.
 - h. Maintain paid invoice for all disbursements.
7. Semi-Annual Duties:
 - a. Cooperate in the audit of the books by members of the District every six months.
8. Annual Duties:
 - a. Prepare a budget of expenditures for the next fiscal year.
 - b. Train new Treasurer if election year.

DISTRICT 8 SECRETARY:

Description: The District 8 Secretary is a member of the executive committee, along with the DCM, Alternate DCM, and Treasurer.

Selection and Qualifications Requirements: Must be an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous, with a minimum of two years of continuous sobriety. Elected by the membership of District 8 in even years for a two-year term.

Functions and Responsibilities:

1. Attend monthly business meetings of District 8, and provide a report.
2. Where no other member of the executive committee (DCM, Alternate DCM or Treasurer) is present at a District 8 Business Meeting, the Secretary should act as Chairperson of said business meeting.
3. Be familiar with the SPJD of the DCM in the event that it is necessary to perform those duties.
4. Record the minutes of every District 8 Business meeting.
5. Distribute, in a timely manner, said minutes to the following:
 - a. The District Officers of District 8.
 - b. All Service Chairs from District 8.
 - c. All registered GSR's from District 8.
 - d. All registered group contacts from District 8.
 - e. The Chairperson of Area 24.
 - f. The Delegate of Area 24.
 - g. The Chairperson of District 8 Al-Anon.
 - h. Copies should be made available to other A.A. members when possible without incurring undue expense to the District, or at the specific request of the District Body.
6. Distribute communications from the Executive Committee, and/or Subcommittee chairs to the main Minutes mailing list, in-between monthly meetings, where necessary.



4TH STEP (CONT)

Part 2 to last month's Step 4's article

When I got into the fear work, the book really had some strong language in respect to the role fear had played in my life. Fear somehow touches every aspect of my life; the fabric of my existence was shot through with it. It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve, but did not we ourselves set the ball rolling? As I read, some passages came to mind from earlier in the book. Chapter 4 stated I lived in a self-imposed crisis, the third step reading said my problems were basically of my own making, and when I started inventory it said being convinced that self manifested in various ways was what had defeated us.

On page 68 it says we reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them. We asked ourselves why we had them? Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us? My sponsor asked me to prayerfully make a list of everything I had ever been afraid of and to write it out as if no one would ever see it. Once I had my list, he went over it with me. He said largely what we have here is what I would term surface fears, now we are going to group up the duplicates and try to find the root fears underlying these things. For example, I had a dozen different ways I was scared of dying. We marked all of those out and I saw I had a root fear of dying. I had several fear aspects of failure; such as relapse, divorce, not being a good father, etc... We marked those out and I saw that I had a root fear of failure. We went through my entire list in this manner and got it down to 8-10 root fears and did the writing on them. For example, I had a fear of death, so per the instructions I wrote out why I had this fear and I wrote on it until I could see exactly where self-reliance failed me. I could put my finger on it; right there, that is where I don't trust God. I could see exactly where and how self-reliance failed me. I could see that when I became afraid my reliance was either on me or others to not be afraid. This was an absolute awakening with the awareness of these things. This completed the equation with the resentment inventory. Every time I had ever been angry something was threatened inside of me first. Every time something was threatened, I was in fear, and every time I was afraid it was a result of self-reliance failing me. So, my part or my role in this entire mess of my whole life was 100% me, all of it because it only lived in my own mind. AA in three words or less; it isn't them. I thought it was them my whole life. This revelation undid a lot of the lies I had been telling myself to justify my judgments of others. I could truly see that it never was between me and them. It's always been between me and God.

The sex conduct inventory was a powerful piece of work as well. My first few sponsors asked me to start with a list of everyone I had ever done anything with sexually. So therefore, I asked others to do the same. I no longer give these instructions because they are not part of the process in our book. Before we get into the writing, the book says, we are not to be the arbiter of anyone's conduct. The way I read that I'm not even to be the arbiter of my own conduct. The book asks nine questions concerning my past conduct, it says we got this all down on paper and looked at it. My sponsor asked me to be prayerful and specific concerning my past conduct. The first set of questions asked; Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? I went into prayer and wrote out specific things that came to mind in reference to these questions. Next it asked, whom had I hurt? This gave me an opportunity to list some names, in a sense the list was making itself. Not in the way the instructions in the resentment inventory gave me, but this list would come into play when I got to step 8. My sponsor encouraged me to look at the ripple effect of my decisions with this question. I had several affairs in my past and caused lots of pain indirectly in people's lives. Maybe a partner had children that I became close with, or the ladies I brought around my own children. Once the relationship was over I never want to hear her name again. I began to see a clear view of how my actions affect others. The next set of questions asked if I had unjustifiably aroused jealousy, suspicion, or bitterness? I had plenty of specific things to list here as well. Next, where was I at fault? I was in a committed relationship or they were I should have left them alone. I could clearly see that I had been using people to feel better my whole life. I would use deceit and lies to be whatever I thought I needed to be to get what I want. Once I was done I would throw away that relationship like trash and hunt for the next. The final question asks what should I have done instead? There are so many people that I've interacted with in my life that I wish I would have kept on walking right past. I was never an equal partner in an honest relationship. I wish I had been kinder to so many people. Our book says that our dark past is the greatest asset we have, that we can save people's lives because of it. But I am not someone who would not change anything in their past. I have hurt so many people because of the selfishness and greed I displayed. None of them deserved any of it.

The final piece of inventory in my fourth step came after the nine questions. It says we ask God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. Whatever our ideal turns out to be we must be willing to grow toward it. In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it. My sponsor said quit avoiding this stuff. You are either surrendered or you are not. This was in a sense, my ticket to freedom concerning my future conduct. I don't ever want to hurt another living being for the rest of my life and I am willing to do whatever AA asks me to do, to never be the man I was when I came here.

~submitted by Josh A, Mazie, OK

5TH STEP

Life is messy. My life was a mess. And I felt as if I had messed up a lot in life. Also...I was sure that other people, places, and things had messed with me! I would sit in meetings and hear people talk about their 5th Step experiences. Little by little, my thoughts of "I'll have to figure out a way to get out of that step!" turned into "maybe, just maybe I could do that step." Working Steps 1 through 4 with my sponsor knee-to-knee, shoulder-to-shoulder, I had built up trust in my sponsor. She would, to my surprise, share details about her own 4th Step. I was beginning to understand that I'm not unique, I'm no better, no worse, and that my God didn't design me to walk alone. My sponsor had become a "soft place to land."

I was very nervous when I met my sponsor to dive into my first 5th Step! We got silent, did some breathing, and we prayed. She also read a part of "Into Action" before I began. "We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past." I not only heard those directions, but suddenly I knew I WILL do this step. Somebody, something, had gifted me with the confidence to press on! My old ideas needed to be set aside and I couldn't allow pride to keep me from my purpose. God will shine that light back and forth over my life to see the truth. I really did want to get it all out. Wanting every nook and cranny to be cleared out with a clean gust of wind. I proceeded to "go to it". As I spoke, I felt no judgment or condemnation. The Big Book says, "we often find such a person quick to see and understand our problem." What I received from her was love, understanding, and trust. We talked about all my character defects. In the Big Book it says, "whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it." Those character defects are objectionable to me, so I decided that I was willing to grow towards their opposites. For example, when I see the destructiveness of my jealousy, I want to turn to being loving, edifying, friendly, and having good will.....these are just a few of those "ideals" that I can grow toward.

Afterwards, I followed the instructions my sponsor read to me from the Big Book. I spent the hour carefully reviewing. Though there wasn't a burning bush moment after that first 5th Step, I did receive so much from it. I personally love the 5th Step promises! "The nearness of our Creator" and "walking hand and hand with the Spirit of the Universe" had replaced my thoughts of my messy, messed up, messed with, mess of a life.

I am not afraid of the 5th Step today. The sponsor I have now I have had for several years. She shows up the same as my first sponsor did.....she comes to the table honoring this step and with the posture that tells me she's here for me. And always bringing to light in a direct and loving way, the question of "what haven't you told me?" God always shows up too because I need Him and want Him there. What a peaceful feeling! I get to "grow up" a little more each time I do a 5th Step and God continues to break spiritual ground within me. It is an honor too, today to hear and get to be that witness to a 5th Step for someone else. God didn't design us to walk alone. Thank God!

-Laura C.H.

AA GRAPEVINE

AA GRAPEVINE NEW BOOK

Our Twelve Steps

It's the book you've been waiting for

Our Twelve Steps is a brand-new collection of stories from AA members about the joys and challenges of working the program's Twelve Steps of recovery.

Each chapter illuminates a different Step through the experiences of a wide variety of AA members. This volume features all new, up-to-date stories from the pages of Grapevine, the International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous.

It's a must-have for sponsees and AA Step meetings.

Learn more [here](#).

Fifth Step Prayer

Higher Power,
My inventory has shown me
who I am,
Yet I ask for Your help
In admitting my wrongs to
another person & to You.
Assure me, & be with me, in
this Step,
For without this Step I
cannot progress in my
recovery.
With Your help, I can do this,
& I do it.



Ever wonder how a simple idea between two friends became a global movement? Stay tuned for next month's newsletter where we unravel the fascinating journey of Alcoholics Anonymous from its humble beginnings to its worldwide impact.

MAY 2024 PG 4

Disclaimer: The District 8 Newsletter is edited and published by and for people in recovery. Its articles reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. None of its contributors (or even the Newsletter Editor) speaks for A.A. or District 8 as a whole. In determining the editorial content, the Chair relies on the principles of the Twelve Traditions. However, we respect everyone's right to have their say and to pursue their recovery in their own way. Yet what works for one individual or A.A. Group may not work for another. The Newsletter tries to embody the widest possible view of the A.A. Fellowship. It is solely provided by District 8 of Alcoholics Anonymous as part of its service to the community. The newsletter is not affiliated with the A.A. Fellowship. For more information, please contact the District 8 Newsletter Editor.