

# THE NIGHT CAP

Published Monthly by the Central Committee of AA in San Antonio. Address all Communications to PO Box 644, San Antonio, Texas. Tel F.2523 - Day or Night.....

VOLUME TWO

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NUMBER SIX

## AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS

STEP NO. 3: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

These first three steps, in our opinion, are the meat in the whole program. If you have studied these three steps closely and remained sober in the meantime, you are well on the way to a new and better way of life. You have admitted you are powerless over alcohol and that your life was made unmanageable by its consumption. You came to believe that a power greater than yourself could restore you to sanity.

Now you are going to make a decision to do something about the mess you have been in until now. Of course, there are those of us who are not strong enough to go any farther sincerely; the reasons are myriad, chief among them being that we have heard so many tales of sordid doings among some of the other alcoholics we have met that we have changed our minds about being an alcoholic and we have mental reservations about the whole deal. We "come to believe" wrongly, of course, that we can do a little social drinking.

Members of AA have no quarrel with you if you are not an alcoholic. If you think you can do that "social drinking", we wish you the best of luck and some of us even think that the sooner you make the great experiment of trying to drink socially, the sooner you will get it over with and come back to AA and make it stick. And we all pray that you will come back and not be ashamed about it, for there's not much difference between coming back than there was in coming the first time.

But, if you are ready for this third step, it's a "booger" and a whale of an order. It's one thing to "make a decision" and something else again to "turn our will

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## WHEN GOD PROBES

In the book of Job in the Old Testament there is a question that needs to find lodging in the heart of every man. Job asked, "will it be well when God probes you?" One of the most challenging things that can happen to any of us is to have God probe our lives.

Justus explained it to the Roman tribune Marcellus, in Lloyd C. Douglas' book, "The Robe". Marcellus asked Justus where Jesus went when He arose. Justus replied, "I don't know, my friend. I only know that He is alive---and I am always expecting to see Him. Sometimes I feel aware of Him, as if He were close by." Justus smiled faintly, his eyes wet with tears. "It keeps you honest. You have no temptation to cheat anyone, or lie to anyone, or hurt anyone---when for all you know, Jesus is standing beside you." Marcellus replied, "I'm afraid I should feel very uncomfortable being perpetually watched by some invisible presence." Justus softly replied, "Not if that presence helped you to defend yourself against yourself, Marcellus. It is a great satisfaction to have someone standing by to keep you at your best."

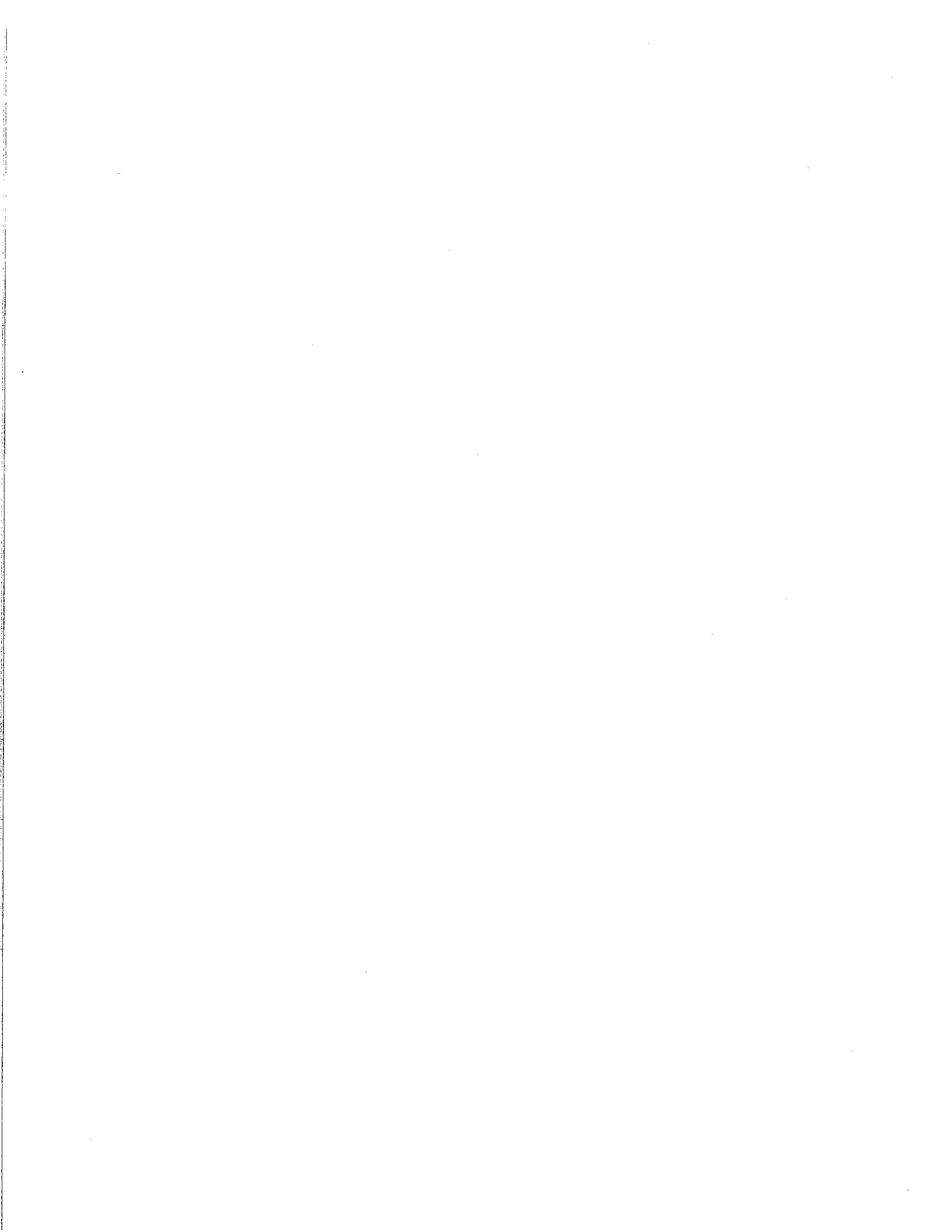
### HELP WANTED!

Won't you please write an article of from 300 to 500 words for The Nightcap and send it to Arthur at 1319 McKinley. We don't want to write it all for fear you will get to dislike it. So please help. Do it now!

We all need that presence standing by to keep us at our best. We all need God's probing our morals to keep us clean. Is it well when God probes your morals? It is not well when He probes mine. I have so many moral slips in my past that all He would have to do to convict me would be to say, "Son, remember."

We all need God's probing presence to keep us useful. My highest and yet most humbling moments are those occasions when I ask myself, "What am I good for? What contribution am I making to God and my fellowmen?" If you haven't tried this, try it today.

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NIGHTCAP GETS AROUND

Doc received a letter from Noel C. from Maracaibo, Venezuela, the other day which contained a check for \$4.00 and the promise: "Will send \$4.00 each month." Also accompanying the letter was a clipping from the January Nightcap which called attention to the need of the Central Office for support from the AA membership.

Noel joined AA in San Antonio and The Nightcap is forwarded to him from an Austin Highway address. How are you doing otherwise, Noel?

- - - AA - - -

And another letter from Shorty T. from Menard enclosing a check for \$2.50 "So you can keep The Nightcap coming." Also mentioned that they visited Brady, Coleman and San Angelo. Said they would have an open meeting at Menard on Feb. 26 at which Macon F. would be the speaker. Thanks for the subscription Shorty, and kindest regards to you and Camella.

CALLING ALL ALCOHOLIC WOMEN

In the belief that the time is ripe and the need is great for a woman's group of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Antonio, several women alcoholics met in the Industrial group office at 614 Avenue E Sunday, Feb. 17, 1952, at which time they decided to form such a group.

The purpose of the group is to help themselves by helping others --the newcomer, the alcoholic woman without any group or club affiliation, and these who are having trouble keeping on the AA program.

The meetings will be on Tuesdays at 6:30 P.M. in the office of the Industrial group. The 1st meeting will be held Tuesday, Feb. 26.

Those alcoholic women who are married may bring husband as far as the door to the office, where he may be left in the friendly lounge room of the Industrial group headquarters where he will, of course be welcome and probably will thoroughly enjoy himself shooting the breeze with his fellow non-alcoholics; or even some of us alkies are intelligent enough to carry on

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TWELVE ESSENTIAL STEPS  
LEADING TO A NEW WAY OF LIFE

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His Will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and practice these principles in all our affairs.

---AA---

BIRTHDAYS FOR MARCH

- 1 YEAR: Col. S. C. T.; Bob M.
- 2 YEARS: Marion W.
- 3 YEARS: Abe G.; Jack L.; E. M. "Doc" W.
- 4 YEARS: Frank B. Jr.; Dr. Joe C. M.; Walter P.; Sgt. C. H. M.
- 7 YEARS: Grace D.
- 9 YEARS: Jack C.
- 10 YEARS: Hollis N.

---AA---



AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS  
(Cont'd from Page 1.)

and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him". But don't get in such a big hurry to get it done. After all, you took plenty of time to get yourself ready to come to AA in the first place, and you're staying sober for 24 hours at a time, and trying to the best of your ability to study and apply these suggested steps to yourself. So what if it does take you the rest of your life to get it perfectly?

While you're staying sober and trying to apply these steps you are broadening yourself in every way. So our advice is to "make the decision", and then really try to "turn your will and your life over to your God."

Also while you are trying, sincerely to make this step you are gradually learning that the people around you have the same right to live and breathe and think as you yourself have. We are learning tolerance, and in case you don't know it, tolerance means "allowance of that which you do not wholly approve".

So, if it seems to you that it will take you too long to act on this third step, don't let it bother you. Just try, and do the best you can, and you will be pleasantly mindful that your higher power has gone actively to work on your behalf, and is actually creeping, gradually into your everyday life and thoughts.

--- Arthur C.

CALLING ALL ALCOHOLIC WOMEN  
(Con'd from Page 2.)

an every-day conversation, if you stick to the fundamentals.

The meetings will be over at 7:30 to allow plenty of time to get to the City-wide meeting in the West Wing of the Municipal Auditorium at 8:15.

The help and cooperation of every alcoholic woman in San Antonio is needed in this new group and you are sincerely urged to attend.

Name of this new group is Womans' Group.

DIRECTORY OF SAN ANTONIO AA  
ACTIVITIES

Call Fannin 2523 for information regarding any AA activities in San Antonio and the Southwest Texas Region.

MONDAY

Suburban, State Hospital and Industrial Groups, 8 P.M. Group 12 Discussion.

TUESDAY

City-wide meeting in West Wing of the Municipal Auditorium, 8 P.M., under sponsorship of the San Antonio Central Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous. Open to the public. Womens Group, 6:30 P.M., 614 Avenue E.

WEDNESDAY

Alamo Heights, Collins Gardens and Highland Park Groups, 8 P.M. Group 12 Discussion Meeting, 8 P.M. Highland Park Group meetings open.

THURSDAY

Olmos Park and Earl Groups, 8 P.M. (Earl Group is for colored people- meets at 614 Ave. E.)

FRIDAY

Downtown and Group 12, 8 P.M.  
Downtown Group meets in Sahara Clubrooms. Family Group meets at 8 P.M.  
Friday in Sahara Clubrooms.  
Group 12 meets in Club 12 Clubrooms.  
Family Group meets at 8 P.M. in Club 12 Clubrooms.

SATURDAY

Industrial Group, 8 P.M. Open to the public. Meets at 614 Avenue E.

SUNDAY

Downtown Group Discussion meeting, 4:30 P.M. Industrial Group, 8 P.M.

---AA---

WHEN GOD PROBES  
(Con'd from Page 1.)

We all need God's probing presence to keep us loyal. Shakespeare said through one of his characters, "O heaven, if man were but loyal he were perfect." Loyalty is one of man's highest attributes: loyalty to friends, loyalty to ideals, loyalty to self, and loyalty to God. We remain loyal only when we allow God to probe us.

But when does God probe us and how? He probes us when we will let Him. When we pay the price of serious thinking, God probes us. When we pay the price of honest prayer and worship God probes us. But we must let Him. We hold the key to God's entrance into our lives.

--- REV. W. EARL WALDROP



MAKE YOUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT DAILY

Since November, 1951, we have heard of five "slips" of AA members who had over five years of continuous sobriety. Each of those members are well known to us personally. There was a time when we would have been upset, emotionally and physically by each of these misfortunes, and five of them coming within the space of three months would probably have caused us to throw in the sponge and join those slippers.

We are not trying to say that we are not deeply affected by this horrible news, but not to the extent of even thinking of giving up our continuous sobriety. Not now that we have had years in which to study the twelve steps of our recovery program in conjunction with many case histories of individuals of our immediate acquaintance.

One thought that persists in presenting itself is the percentage table. AA statistics show a total of 65 per cent of recoveries among those who apply to themselves the AA program. Selfishly, we think: "Each individual that gets drunk among us, lowers our chances, according to the percentages."

Another thought is our adopted AA prayer: "God grant me the Serenity to accept things I cannot change, Courage to change things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference."

We have sincerely asked God (as we understand Him) to grant us the serenity to accept the fact of another's misfortune, which we cannot change, and furthermore, which we had no opportunity to avert or keep from becoming fact.

Then the logical thought occurs that, surely, these events were not a fault of AA, but a fault of the individual. If we remember our daily contacts with God (As we understand Him) and remember how deeply we had been affected when we first contacted AA and made the admission that we were alcoholics, that our lives had become unmanageable; came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity; made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

If we remember how willingly and gladly we made the inventory of ourselves and contacted those we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them and even did so when to do so would not injure them or others. All these things, we have to entirely forget before we can take that first drink of alcoholic beverage, or even take medication which might contain alcohol.

Another thing that our personal experience has taught us is that failure to attend meetings at the level of the attentive listener, even when we know that we are not going to be called on to speak, or recognized as being in attendance at the meeting, has a tendency to make us forget the intensity of our need for the group therapy that did us so much good as a newcomer to the fellowship of AA.

So, although we are sincerely sympathetic toward those who have lost contact with their better way of life by following the AA program, we refuse to let the fact make more than a passing ripple on the serenity of our conscious contact with God as we understand Him. And we pray that those hapless individuals may recover their health immediately and renew their contacts with AA and their God and "Live happily ever after".

HERE'S WHY

Did you ever wonder as you sat at the bar and swirled the foam in your beer glass, just where it came from? Probably thought it was the hops, or the yeast, didn't you? Nope! It was the colloidal particles acting as nuclei releasing carbon dioxide from the unstable, super saturated solution of carbon dioxide existing when the container was opened. Almost simpler to stay sober than drink nowadays, isn't it?

--- Here's How

The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time.



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--- AA ---

F E B R U A R Y B I R T H D A Y S :

1 YEAR: George D.; Walter H.G.; Lucille G.; Leo S.H.; Jerry R.; Witt R.

2 YEARS: W. R. "Andy" A.; mitte P.; Marthe S.

3 YEARS: Robert B.; Harriet C.; Louise D.; R. G. "Bobby" M.

4 YEARS: A. E. "Pop" W.

5 YEARS: Earl A.; Jay G.; W.F. "Bill" McA.

6 YEARS: Arthur M.C.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ social workers.
9. AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

--- AA ---

"God does not judge man until the end of his days. Are you the greater that you can judge him sooner?"

