

No Booze News

Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas

Volume LXLII Number 3

July - August - September 2024

NEXT MEETING

The Intergroup Council's next meeting is **Sunday, July 28, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.. We meet at 411 Sellers in Hot Springs.**

Please send a Representative from your group or meeting!



Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas welcomes your active participation.

We encourage each District 8 group to send a representative to Intergroup Council so we may best serve our District. We want to make informed decisions that benefit all our members!

John's Story...

One of the things I remember most about my school days were that we addressed teachers by Mrs., Miss or Mr. Saying please, thank you, yes ma'm and no sir, were second nature and always expected. Interrupting a conversation was not acceptable.

Courtesy makes our day more pleasant; makes me feel better about myself. That simple. People judge us by the behavior we practice both in public and in private. A friend tells me that she wants to be the same person in public as she is in private with her dog: kind, loving and helpful.

The Twelve Traditions teach courtesy and consideration of others. Sobriety gives me the ability to think and consider my actions and change my actions for the better.

Little things we can do are: Make promises sparingly and keep those you make. Acknowledge people you meet with a warm "Hello" and a smile. Driving? Let another driver go in front of you. Avoid talking over someone else; let others have a say. Don't interrupt. If you make a mess, clean up after yourself. Go to your home group and volunteer for service job or, just help with set up or clean up. Life is more enjoyable.

IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO!

OUR DISTRICT 8 MEETING IN PRINT!

Check out the Intergroup Council's outstanding website! <https://aawcar.org/>
Find a meeting, District 8 events, No Booze News, and the Bookstore.

BOOKSHOP HOURS: Located at 411 Sellers street, the Bookstore is Open before and after the 8:00 a.m., noon, and 8:00 p.m. meetings. If you need to purchase books at other times, send John K. a text at [501-282-9838](tel:501-282-9838) or order on our website

VOLUNTEER

IT'S EGO DEFLATION FRIENDLY

WANTED

A REPRESENTATIVE FROM YOUR GROUP TO YOUR INTERGROUP COUNCIL

Since the Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas is yours, take ownership and participate representing your home group. The Intergroup Council Representative job description is simple and you can do it:

- Attend the quarterly meetings
- Gather information about Intergroup Council, the programs and activities
- Bring the needs of your group to Intergroup Council; this helps the Council know how to best serve all the groups in District 8.
- Serve on committees or as an officer, if you like.
- Recruit volunteers and other group attendees to help with programs
- Organize a service day with your group for Intergroup Council
- Encourage non-represented groups to send an Intergroup Council Representative.
- Communicate ideas and suggestions with meeting and with Intergroup Council
- Support District 8 events like Bake at the Lake

The only requirement is to attend the quarterly meetings representing your group.

INTERGROUP & A.A. WHAT IS THE CONNECTION?

An intergroup office is an A.A. service office. Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas established to carry out certain functions best handled by a centralized office — maintained, supervised, and supported by District 8 groups, Intergroup Council exists to aid all the groups in their purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas is a service entity focused exclusively on the needs of District 8 groups. The objective Intergroup Council is to fulfill specific needs of the groups it serves, such as publishing local A.A. meeting schedules, answering inquiries about A.A., providing a bookstore, and publishing a newsletter. But Intergroups are not part of A.A.'s decision-making or service structure.

“In 1990 the General Service Office (GSO) stressed the importance of communication and recommended that Delegates establish and maintain contact with Central and Intergroup offices in their Areas to share Conference information and assure Central/Intergroup offices have a voice in the Fellowship through their service structure.” (2021-2023 A.A. Service Manual, page 160)

“Unity is the glue that holds the intergroup/central offices and general services together, but it is communication that jump starts mutual cooperation and harmony — vital both in reaching suffering alcoholics and in being attuned to the needs of those who are recovering in A.A.”

Reprinted from Intergroup/Central Offices: A.A.'s Front Line — Box 459 – August/September 2007 permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.

BELONGING

Growing up in Olive Branch, Mississippi, my childhood unfolded against a backdrop of seeming normalcy, yet I grappled with a profound sense of not fitting in due to being on the autistic spectrum. Despite efforts to connect, inclusion remained elusive. It wasn't until the latter part of high school that I discovered alcohol, which initially offered a sense of belonging and acceptance among peers. What started as occasional drinking gradually escalated into excessive consumption, blurring the line between camaraderie and dependency.

As alcohol became my constant companion, my social circle dwindled, and my life spiraled into a haze of perpetual intoxication. Sobriety became a fleeting promise each night, only to be shattered by the first drink each morning. By the age of 22, the toll on my health was undeniable—yellowing skin and signs of severe liver damage served as stark reminders of the path I was on.

Seeking a way out, I found myself at Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), a pivotal moment where, for the first time, I felt a genuine connection and acceptance. However, simply attending meetings didn't immediately alleviate my struggles.

It was through embracing AA's twelve-step program that I began to find a path to redemption. The steps became a lifeline, guiding me towards reclaiming sanity and rebuilding my life piece by piece.

Through this journey, I discovered more than sobriety; I learned how to cultivate meaningful relationships and navigate the challenges of employment. Each step forward was accompanied by a newfound

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MY STORY

My childhood was normal with no abuse, poverty, or tragedy to speak of. The only thing that marked my childhood was me.

I've always been maladjusted to life on life's terms. Selfish and self seeking from the beginning. Always wanting more than my fair share of everything: attention, love, luck, and money. In this way, I was an alcoholic years before I even took my first drink. I've always been an egomaniac with no self-esteem and a nervous disposition. It was hard for me to make friends because I was shy and it was hard for me to keep friends because I was domineering and needy.

At a friends house, we raided her parent's liquor Cabinet and I had my first drink at 13. By the end of the night I Was "Knee crawling" drunk but I fell in love with the way I felt. For the first time in my life I could talk and laugh and didn't care how anyone looked. The sickness I felt for days was worth it. I found alcohol for myself as often as possible.

It caused a lot of scrapes and troubles for my family and me for many years. I lost the trust of my family and a friends; a husband; custody of one child and a relationship with the other child. In the end, I was homeless and living off of my mother, I had no job for many years because I couldn't hold one down. Eventually I met a man who was also an alcoholic and moved in with him. It's a miracle we are still alive. He was arrested on a drunk driving charge and sent to prison for two years.

When he came home, he was sober and he remained that way, to my dismay. I started attending AA meetings with him with no intention of staying sober. I had some outside issues that had reared their ugly heads and they all ran dry on a Sunday.

Cont'd, page 4

in May 2020. To add insult to injury, where I live, we can't buy alcohol on Sundays. This was divine intervention and I was given the gift of desperation.

I felt like I was dying. I called a member of Alcoholics Anonymous who picked up the phone. He told me I needed medical detox and what to do. I was so desperate that I did it.

I was in detox for seven days and a treatment program for 28 days. When I got home, I was so terrified of relapse that I went to every meeting I could. A lot of meetings were on ZOOM because of Covid but that was OK with me. I stayed in meetings and kept doing what people told me to do.

I found a sponsor and worked the steps. It was a poor try the first time because I didn't believe them when they told me there was no easier softer way. I tried to do it my way and held some things back. I continued to stay sober but I was still maladjusted to life. So I found another sponsor and tried again.

Since then *every single promise* in the ninth steps has come true for me. I have a higher power who never lets me down. I have a support system in my home group and trustworthy people who give me sound suggestions if I need them. I have a good job. I have a sober romantic partner and a home, I have repaired relationships with my daughters and friends.

Too, I have an opportunity to be of service to my fellow Alcoholics and my fellow man. Alcoholics have never lied to me or led me astray. They've given me a new life. I have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence and I love it here. My only wish is for my story to help someone else.

Lyla R.

sense of purpose and clarity. Serving within AA provided me with the opportunity to give back—to extend the same support and understanding that had once been extended to me during my darkest hours.



Today, reflecting on my journey from isolation to belonging, from dependence to independence, I am grateful for the resilience that has carried me through. My experience with alcoholism and autism has shaped

my perspective profoundly, fostering empathy and a deep appreciation for the power of community and personal growth. It's a testament to the transformative potential of embracing vulnerability and seeking help when it's needed most.

In conclusion, my journey underscores the importance of perseverance and the transformative power of self-discovery and community support. Through AA, I not only found sobriety but also a renewed sense of purpose and belonging—a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the healing power of connection.

James O.
July 20, 2017

84th "OLD GRANDAD", July 26 - 28, 2024;
Arkansas State AA Convention, \$25.00 registration
by July 12 or pay \$30 after July 12 & at the door.

JUST KIDDIN'

A guy stumbles through the front door of a bar, ambles up to the bartender, and orders a beer. The bartender looks at the drunk man and says, "I'm sorry sir, but I can't serve you... you've already had too much to drink." The guy swears and walks out of the bar.

Five minutes later the guy comes flying through the side door of the bar, and yells for a beer. Again the bartender says, "I'm sorry, sir...but I can't serve you...you've already had too much to drink!"

Ten minutes later, the same guy comes barreling through the back door of the bar, storms up to the bartender, and demands a beer. Again, the bartender says to the man, 'I'm really sorry, sir, but you've had too much to drink...you're going to have to leave!"

The guy looks quizzically at the bartender and finally says, "My God, man... How many bars do you work at?!"

AN ALCOHOLIC IS:

Someone who wants to be held while isolating.

Someone who refuses to give up a life of failure without a fight.

Someone who finds something that works and then stops doing it.

Someone who can be in the gutter and still look down on people.

Someone who keeps doing the same thing over and over expecting different results.

Just for today...

I will try to live through this day only and not tackle my whole life at once.

Three of the most dangerous words for an alcoholic: "I've been thinking."

Green

A son asks his dad,.. "Hey dad, what is an alcoholic?"

Dad puts his arm around his son and says, "Well son, you see those four trees over there, an alcoholic would see eight trees." The son responds, "But dad, there are only two trees there."

Every day, a doctor goes into a bar and orders a walnut daiquiri. One day, it tasted a bit off so he said to the bartender, "This isn't a walnut daiquiri, is it?"

The bartender replied "No, it's a hickory daiquiri doc."

What did the wine say to the glass? I've been bottled up all day.

Alcohol may not solve your problems, but neither will milk.

Directions to AA: Go straight to hell and make a U-Turn.

AA is the only place where you can walk into a room full of strangers and reminisce.

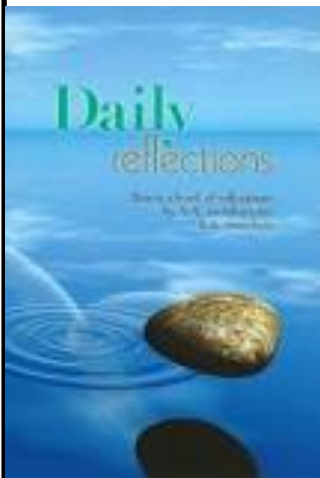
Want to hear God laugh? Tell Him your plan.



DOWNSTAIRS BOOKSTORE

Daily Reflections is a collection of reflections that moves through the calendar year one day at a time: A.A. members reflect on favorite quotations from the literature of Alcoholics Anonymous and focuses on the twelve Steps and twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. This book was written by Alcoholics for Alcoholics. Although there were many books, like 24 Hours A Day, used by alcoholics, none like **Daily Reflections** had been written or existed.

This book was meant to fulfill a need within the A.A. Fellowship for a collection of reflections for each day based on the



principles of the Fellowship and Program. As you look through it, you'll see each page starts with a quote from AA Conference-approved literature followed by a meditation written by an A.A. member. The quotes are from Conference Approved literature including Alcoholics Anonymous,

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, and As Bill Sees It, among others. The quotes also provide an introduction to AA literature and thought.

Each reflection was submitted by members of A.A., not professional writers. Each shares their experience, strength and hope from their own life in A.A. The writers focused on the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

Daily Reflections has proven to be an invaluable aid in the practice of daily meditation, prayer and living a sober life.

HOW MUCH DO SPEAKERS EARN AT A.A. EVENTS?

\$0.00. A.A. Speakers are not paid. Usually the conference pays or reimburses only transportation, lodging and meals, but there is no financial payment or wage. That being said, one speaker mentioned that even after transportation and board are paid, she generally “ends up paying a fair amount of her own money on each engagement.” Not to mention time traveling roundtrip, usually staying two to three days. Why do they speak? We are a “fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

WHEN I AM ASKED TO BE A GUEST SPEAKER, HOW SHOULD I TELL MY STORY?

By Anonymous A.A. Member & Speaker

Our primary purpose is to carry the message of our Twelve Step solution to the disease of alcoholism as described in the Alcoholics Anonymous. When we are asked to share our story, what should we say and how should we say it?

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous gives specific directions on page 58:

“Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened and what we are like now.”

Your talk deserves your best effort. It is fine to use forethought of preparation; not sitting down and writing out a speech, but remembering and organizing what you want to say.

Con't page 7. first column

When we step up to the podium, those present know we are alcoholic; we don't need to qualify or prove we are real alcoholics. *What we were like* provides context and illustrates what obstacles we had to overcome. A blow-by-blow drunkalogue stays in the problem. Our drinking story is valuable to help establish a bond with a newcomer so he or she can identify.

Second, we share *what happened*, how did we get to Alcoholics Anonymous. This will not be lengthy, but it is pivotal. This is our transition from problem to solution. *What happened* describes the events that led from our craving for alcohol to having the desire to stop, then to take actions.

Finally, we describe what *we are like now* – how we work and live the program of recovery: attending meetings, getting a sponsor, reading the Big Book, working the Steps, Service Work, AND how we don't drink. We tell how the promises have been fulfilled in our lives as a result of God and Alcoholics Anonymous.

This is the crux of our stories, the reason for our talk. How I live today, with problems and with successes, is what people want to hear and learn. Let us compare and contrast how we lived drinking and how we now live sober; changes in principles and value; our struggles, successes, and the healing of relationships. We describe how our actions, personalities, and lifestyles are different and better.

Don't try to tell your entire life story with every detail nor try to say something profound. Your story is about change:Y going from powerless and unmanageable to a spiritual awakening, to having a Life. How I Stay Sober is a main purpose of our talks. If I can do it, you can do it, too.

Keep your eye on your watch. Close on time. Acknowledge the audience group for inviting you to speak. Sit down and start breathing again. It is emotional to tell our story and such a gift to use it to help another alcoholic.

Contemplate:

Gratitude — for AA and my family - with out AA I would be dead or still in prison and I would have no family. My wife, children, and grandchildren have never seen me take a drink or drinking. Unfortunately they have seen some dry drunks but it has never been necessary for me to take a drink nor any outside issues yet since I sobered up.

Because of what you have done for me and with me, and continue to do, hopefully they never will see that, One Day at a Time. As one of my worksheet AA's told me: "You know if we just stick together, I believe we can make this deal work". I still believe that. I haven't had to do anything alone since my last drink. For that I am filled with gratitude.

Why wouldn't I believe? You have taught me how to love as well as how to live, and you still do. In case I haven't told you lately, Thank you!!! May God keep you and continue to bless you as we Trudge the Road of Happy Destiny....together.

Conley B.

What am I doing today to keep sober?



WHAT IS THE NEXT RIGHT THING!

We don't have rules and regulations in A.A., but we have practices and customs and actions that keep us focused, courteous and our meetings pleasant. As in any social situation, there are particular behaviors and traditions which we practice. These make A.A. more pleasant and enjoyable. **These are the right things to do.**

The Twelve Traditions are guidelines and a structure for our relationships between members, groups, our global Fellowship and society at large. This framework is a system of suggestions, ideas and beliefs about how to treat each other. Parents teach us good manners and proper behavior, but I had to be reminded and taught again and practice.

In my first meeting I immediately knew I was a *stranger in a strange land*, having no idea the price of admission, the cost of coffee, or where to sit. As a newcomer I watched and mimicked people's behavior. Thank God for sponsors!

My sponsor was my example and she taught me: *"Arrive at least 30 minutes early; dress in casual, discreet clothes."* *"Don't sneak in at the last minute and zip out at the Amen."* **It is the right thing to do.**

My sponsor taught me the customs and behaviors of A.A. meetings. *"Put your chair up."* *"You smoke outside, dispose of your butt."* *"Go around the room and greet everyone."* *"Are you happy? Tell your face."* **It is the right thing to do.**

Most meetings ask attendees to go to the restroom and get coffee **before** the meeting starts or the speaker is introduced. Attendees often ignore this request. When I did that once my sponsor took me to task. *"You just told the speaker you don't care about the talk AND you distracted the audience. How would you feel if you were the speaker?"* *"You can*

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Right Thing, Cont'd from first column

wait." **It is the right thing to do.**

Sharing in AA Meetings

At open and closed discussion meetings the group usually suggests a time limit for sharing, allowing more people to participate. Invariably there's one person who drones on and on (sometimes it's me). Seldom will anyone interrupt. That does not give me permission to do the same. I was told bluntly, "Watch the clock." "Take the cotton out of your ears and put it in your mouth. You might learn something that will save your life!" As the newcomer I knew how to drink, but not how to be sober. **It is the right thing to do.**

We do not talk to someone when they are sharing during a meeting. "Cross-talking" interrupts that person and the meeting. It is simply Rude. Speak to the person after the meeting, but during the meeting listen to each person with respect. *"You never know when someone may say something that will later save your life."* **It is the right thing to do.**

My sponsor told me **not** to talk about sensitive topics explaining both Traditions 1 and 10. We come from numerous different social, religious, economic, and political backgrounds. Each one of these topics can be controversial, even offensive. We must remember why we are in a meeting, to share the solution to alcoholism. **It is the right thing to do.**

Privacy and Safety of Other AA Members

No 'thirteen stepping.' This happens when an AA veteran, man or woman, approaches a new member with intentions of instigating a sexual relationship. New AA members join for sobriety, support and community. Providing a safe environment protects all of us and encourages helping each other achieve a spiritual experience and sober life. **It is the right thing to do.**

Cont'd on page 9

A famous actor attended a meeting at a local club house; the AA grapevine spread the word! A very upset member shared a private problem in a meeting that was a juicy story to share. It is tempting to violate anonymity by talking about who we see and what we hear at a meeting. It's crucial to remember that all alcoholics attend AA for the same reason. ***"In stressing the equality of all AA members—and unity in the common bond of their recovery from alcoholism—anonymity serves as the spiritual foundation of the fellowship."**** **It is the right thing to do.**

Gentlemen, please take off your hats indoors. Men remove hats indoors from, in part, traditional and cultural practice. Hats are functional outdoors, protecting from the heat, rain and sun but are obviously unnecessary indoors and are silly. Actually, the important reason to remove a hat is courtesy. **It is the right thing to do.**

Swear words are used for emphasis and to let off steam. We use them without thinking, out of habit. Potty mouths diminish the speaker's credibility and persuasiveness—especially if the speaker is a woman. It is courteous to speak without profanity. As one sign says, swearing doesn't bring you closer to God. **It is the right thing to do.**

Turn Off Cell Phones During Meetings

Before cell phones I doodled in meetings until my sponsor said, *"You are here to learn how to live a sober life, not draw."* We all know people who are not really present in the room, but texting, emailing on their cell, the doodling of today. It is distracting and, again, RUDE. Perhaps they don't know why they are in an AA meeting. Their sponsor should explain it to them. **It is the right thing to do.**

My sponsor and many members of AA hurt my feelings with their guidance on my behavior. But ALL did so to help me be a sober member of AA. I'm grateful. **It is the right thing to do.**

Thank you!

THE A.A. AUDIENCE

You are speaking tonight, nervous, wanting to do a good job. You are introduced and walk to the podium whispering a prayer, "help me God not to screw this up, but if I do, thanks for being with me!"

Suddenly someone comes rushing in from the back, looking for a seat. Someone else gets up heading to the door, stopping along the way to say "HI!" to friends. You are describing "what happened" when a phone blares Alice Cooper's "Schools Out."

Sitting in the second row is a guy slumped over asleep while another person is playing with their phone. Several people in the back are whispering and giggling. Someone else is checking their watch, yawning.

You, the speaker, are distracted and discouraged. Being a sensitive alcoholic, you already knew you are a terrible speaker, telling your story all wrong, and you can't get away from the podium fast enough.

How much better when the audience is sitting up in their chairs, alert, smiling at you, encouraging you. Listening.

As a member of the audience it is my responsibility to be present, pay attention, and be encouraging.

A.A. Speakers share very personal, often painful, stories. An encouraging smile, head nodding, and laughter helps the speaker know we are listening and relating. We, the audience, are courteous and thoughtful.

Finally, the audience **stands and applauds**. The meeting closes, but we're not done. As my sponsor firmly told me, *"The speaker just spilled his guts to help you stay sober and grow in A.A. Show your appreciation!"* So many years ago I walked with my sponsor to the stage, patiently stood in line, shook the speaker's hand, and said a sincere "Thank You." I still do.

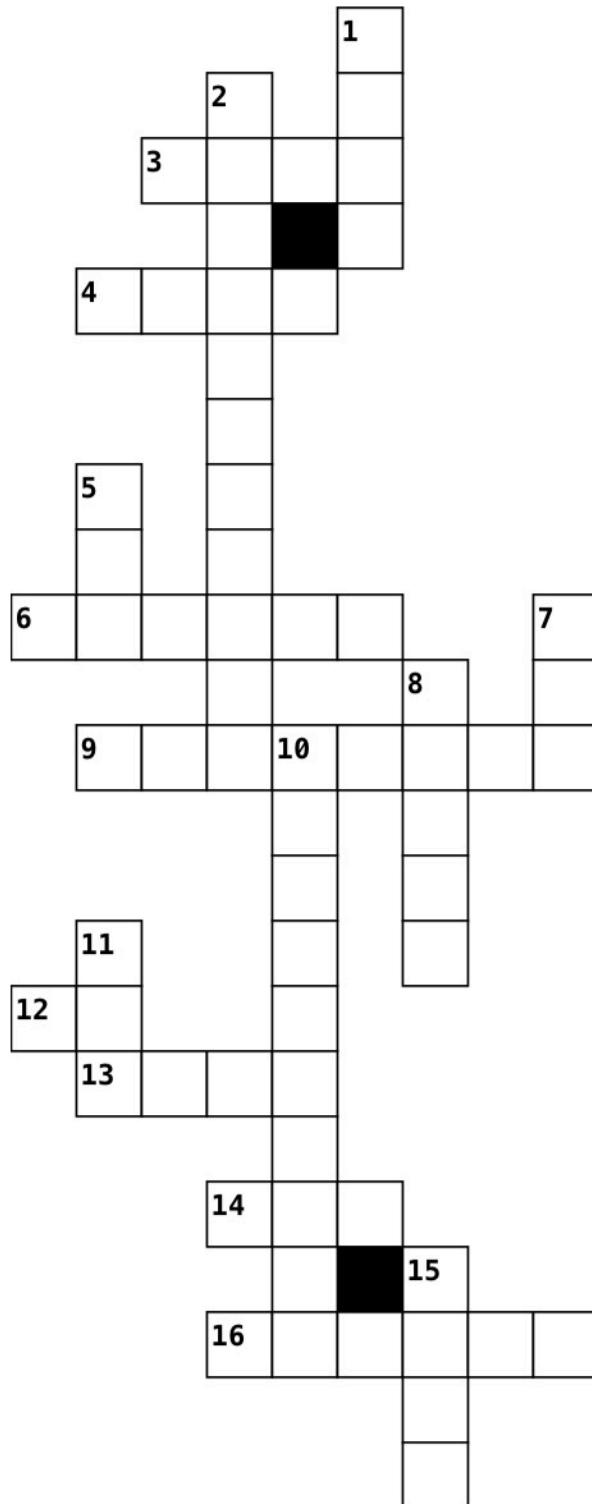
A . A . SLOGANS

Across

- 3. Keep it simple stupid
- 4. Hungry Angry Lonely Tired
- 6. Don't take yourself too seriously
- 9. Doing the same thing over, and over again
- 12. _____to any Lengths
- 13. _____drink even if your ass falls off
- 14. _____day at a time
- 16. _____to stop drinking

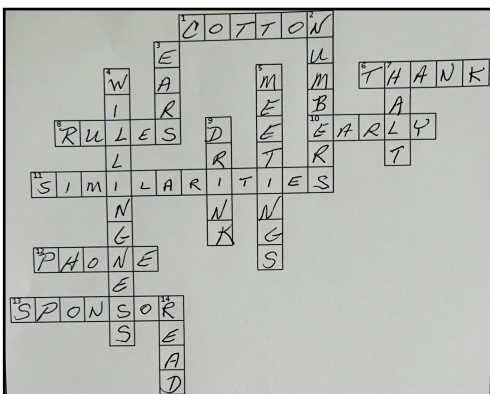
Down

- 1. This too shall _____
- 2. _____is the Key
- 5. _____are not alone
- 7. _____ will be done
- 8. Do the next _____ thing
- 10. Is the answer to all my problems
- 11. Let go and let _____
- 15. Live and Let _____



Answers to Crossword Puzzle

APRIL-MAY-JUNE ISSUE




Do you like these crossword puzzles?
Please let Mara know if you want them
to continue or not. Text:


UPCOMING EVENTS

84th "OLD GRANDDAD", July 26 - 28, 2024; Arkansas State AA Convention, Oldest A.A. Convention West of the Mississippi, Arlington Hotel, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
"Putting It All Together with the Steps, Traditions, & Concepts," Friday, July 26, 9am-5pm; \$25.00 registration before July 12; \$30 after July 12 and at the door.

 **Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas, Sunday, July 28, 2:00 P.M., at 411 Sellers, Hot Springs**

 **DISTRICT 8 COMMITTEE meeting, Sunday, September 1, 411 Sellers, Hot Springs, AR; Committee meetings; 1:30, District Committee 2:00 p.m.**

Arkansas Travelers Roundup 2024, September 19 - 21, 2024; First Baptist 252 Youth Facility, El Dorado, AR (Across from First Baptist Church, 200 W Main St)

 **AREA 4 ASSEMBLY, October 5 & 6th; Holiday Inn Express & Suites-Russellville, 300 East Harrell Drive**

41st ANNUAL AUTUMN IN THE OZARKS, "God could and would if He were Sought", September 20-22, 2024. Ramada Inn, 1127 NE 62 B, Mountain Home, AR 72653 \$20.00 registration before July 12; \$25 after September 1 and at the door.

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL A.A., SWRAA2024.ORG, Service: *Vital to Our Growth* hosted by Northeast Texas Area 65; October 11, 12, 13, 2024, \$20.00; Richardson, TX. Registration@swraa2024.org; Pre-Registration Cut Off Date: 09/27/2024
Regional forums provide unique opportunities for A.A. members. At these events all who attend have the opportunity to connect with people throughout the A.A. service structure and exchange information with representatives of the General Service Board, A.A.W.S., AA Grapevine and GSO.

IS YOUR GROUP HAVING AN EVENT?

Please send event information, with or without flyers, to Mara M., editor, by Text 501-984-3556 or Email, louandmara@icloud.com. Event information will be published here, **Upcoming Events**.

NO BOOZE NEWS is a quarterly newsletter published the first week of January, April, July and October. It is privately emailed to all Intergroup Representatives, District 8 Officers and General Service Representatives, and A.A.member subscribers. It is posted on <https://aawcar.org/>

THREE WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE: first, on our Intergroup Council website at <https://mailchi.mp/894744bb91f5/sign-up-for-the-no-booze-news>; email Mara M. at louandmara@icloud.com or text 501-094-3556.

Is there something you'd like to see in this newsletter? Please let me know! Send a story, an idea about AA, trivia, pun or history item or a joke! You will be greatly appreciated!