

No Booze News

Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas

Volume LXLIV Number 2

April - May - June 2026

OUR DISTRICT 8 MEETING IN PRINT!

NEXT MEETING

The Intergroup Council's
next meeting is

**April 25, 2026,
at 2:00 p.m.**

**411 Sellers, Hot Springs,
Arkansas**

INTERGROUP COUNCIL

John K., Chairperson
Kaycee R., Secretary
Paul K., Treasurer
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Booze News"
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Volunteer Coordinator
& Chair, Annual Picnic
Dave D., Grant County
John S., Central Big
Book Study
Terry T., Rock House
Bob S., D.C.M., District 8

John's Story... Thinking is a mental process of considering or reasoning about something. It is the manipulation of information and ideas which allows us to solve problems, make decisions, make comparisons, reflect on experiences, and contemplate life in general. One goal is for our thoughts to change and better serve our needs.

Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict, Big Book Third Edition, p. 451 (Acceptance Was the Answer, Fourth Edition: p. 419):

"When I focus on what's good today, I have a good day, and when I focus on what's bad, I have a bad day. If I focus on a problem, the problem increases; if I focus on the answer, the answer increases."

Our key is to find a balance that works. Thinking our way through problems is a valuable way of finding solutions. But too much thinking can exacerbate problems. We learn to identify when our thoughts are serving our interests and needs – and when they are leading us nowhere. If we can make this distinction, then we have already won half the battle of our thoughts.

The Twelve Steps can be seen as a giant shift in thinking, one thought at a time. First, our thinking changes from, we drink because we are a bad person and have no willpower, to, we drink the way we do because we are alcoholics powerless over alcohol. Then, we gradually shift from hopelessness to reliance on a Higher Power who can return us to sanity. The next shift is from we can't do this to we trust our Creative Power, to help and guide us. Eventually, our thinking changes, we learn it's not all about us but about helping still suffering alcoholics experience a shift in thinking that brings them to emotional and physical sobriety.

WHO WAS WHO IN A.A.? page 7

INTERGROUP ANSWERING SERVICE, 24 HOURS-7DAYS A WEEK: 501-623-6328

Check out Intergroup Council's outstanding website! <https://aawcar.org/>

All District 8 meetings with contact information; District 8 events; the online Intergroup Bookstore.

BOOKSTORE: 411 Sellers Street; Open before & after the 8:00 a.m., Noon, & 8:00 p.m. meetings.

PROOF

My story did not begin with addiction. It began with pain.

As a child, I experienced sexual abuse that left wounds for which I had no language. Like many survivors, I learned how to function rather than how to heal. I stayed busy. I stayed strong. I stayed silent. What I did not know then was that unaddressed pain does not disappear. It waits.

For years, my life looked successful from the outside. I served as a captain in the fire department in Missouri, a role built on responsibility, leadership, and calm in crisis. I was respected and trusted. I was also a loving father to my two children, a role I took seriously and cherished.

Behind closed doors, however, I was a miserable husband. I was emotionally distant, restless, and disconnected. I did not know how to be present or vulnerable. I was doing life well on paper, but poorly at heart.

My alcohol use began the way it does for many of us. Over time, pain pills entered the picture, followed by harder substances. Each step felt manageable until it was not. Alcohol became a way to numb unresolved trauma, quiet emotional noise, and escape myself.

As my alcoholism progressed, my health collapsed. I developed severe heart disease and lived in a cycle of constant hospitalizations. At one point, I spent eighteen days on a ventilator. It was a near death experience by any definition.

Yet even after that, I still could not quit drinking.

I had convinced myself I was an addict but not an alcoholic, and that belief kept me sick. It allowed me to justify behavior that was slowly killing me. Looking back, denial was just as dangerous as the addiction itself.

On August 8, 2022, I crash landed at SOZO

Proof, Cont'd page 9

SEX CONDUCT

Recently I remembered an event I'd stuffed so deep there was no life and it should have died. Had you asked, I'd have denied any such thing ever happened.

I was dating a man I met when I was attending UA Fayetteville and had been dating for awhile; we were sexually active.

For New Year's Eve he invited me to the big dance. Tickets were around \$75 with a known band. I was so excited I bought a new dress, got my hair done, even a manicure, and was ready when he arrived to pick me up.

We had a great time! The band was great! We danced so much we were exhausted. The dinner was delicious, the champagne best. I, of course, was fascinated with the champagne fountain and happily kept my glass full.

After Auld Lang Syne, kisses, fireworks and one last drink, we went to the car where I insisted on going home, not to his place. I thanked him profusely for a wonderful evening, explained I was exhausted and too tipsy, kissed him good night, and went into the apartment. I don't remember locking the door and it wasn't a habit I worried about.

I undressed, climbed into bed and was ready for sleep. He entered the house and decided to have sex. I remember saying "No." I was in no condition to consent. I evidently passed out; I only remember waking up and knowing what happened. I sat in the shower until water ran cold.

Of course, I didn't call 911, go to the ER, or call anyone for help. I never told anyone. I never looked at it, didn't inventory it, didn't tell a therapist or a sponsor. It was my fault. I put it down to a hard lesson learned and deliberately forgot it ever happened. I was to blame because I was drunk, I put myself in that position.

It never happened. I simply went on with my life, never remembering it.

Conduct, con't page 9

A.A. TRUISM

You talk the talk, but do you walk the talk? Page 4

TO KEEP IT

One of the more common sayings in A.A. is, “*you have to give it away in order to keep it*”. Service in recovery helps the giver as much as the receiver. The individual serves because they know it helps to keep them sober and makes them a better person.

What are the benefits? First, sharing our experience, strength and hope, gives another hope that recovery will work for them. Then, helping others reminds us

- where we have come from, how we have grown.
- Helping others removes the focus on self. If I’m doing something for someone else, then I’m thinking about that person.
- Ensures A.A. will continue and is available to the still suffering alcoholic.

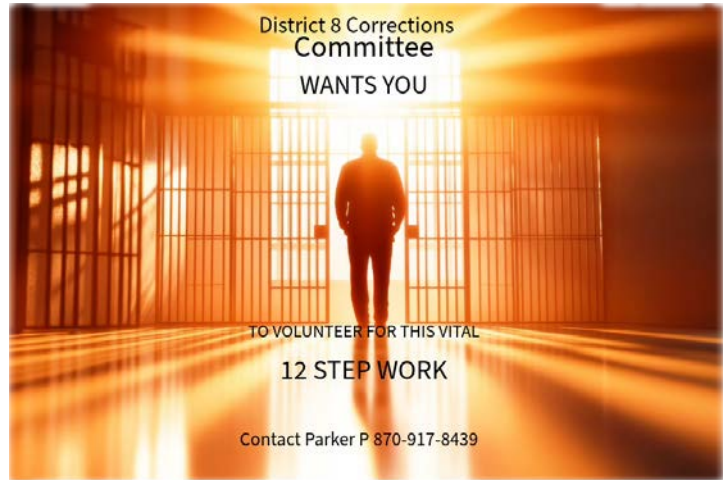
CONGRATULATIONS!

On January, 2026, MO S. was sworn in as a United States Citizen. A Sober Alcoholic from South Africa, she spent 3 years becoming a citizen. She passed the Naturalization Civics Test!!

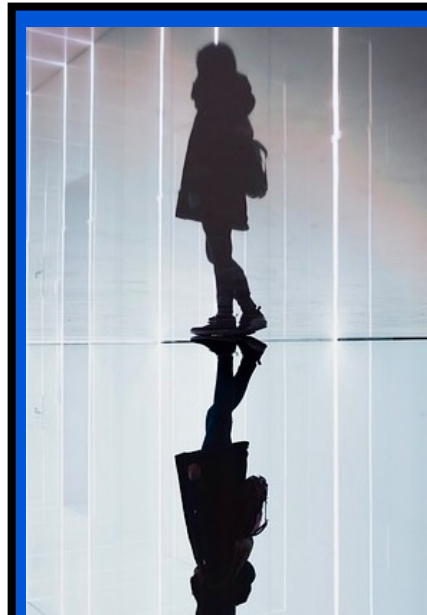


One requirement for Naturalization is to be of “good moral character.” The Steps and recovery leads o being of good moral character!

United States Citizenship is a legal status that entails citizens with specific rights, duties, protections, and benefits. It serves as a foundation of fundamental rights derived from and protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States, such as freedom of expression, due process, the rights to vote, and freedom of faith.



DISTRICT 8 CORRECTIONS COMMITTEE needs your help. To volunteer, either attend the committee meeting on March 1, 1:30 p.m. or call the chair, Parker P. at 870-917-8439.



WALK THE TALK

“Walk the talk” probably evolved as a counterpart to “talk the talk.” The contrast between “talk,” verbal claims, and “walk,” literal actions, highlights the inconsistency that can exist between what

one says and what one does.

Walking the talk is a fundamental practice establishing authenticity, trust, and credibility within our Fellowship, between members. Members who practice this principle create a positive environment of trust. A.A. Members who embody this principle create a positive environment of unity.

How old is this phrase? According to “Phrase Finder,” it is over 100 years old, the earliest usage in the “Mansfield Times,” an Ohio newspaper, printed June 1921.

One of the slogans we hear and see on many A.A. meeting room walls is, **“Think Think Think.”**

To think means to have thought or belief about something or someone; it is the feeling of being certain that something exists or is true. When I first came into A.A., I saw that on a wall and it just baffled me (go figure). 33 years later, it still baffles me (even though I have a much better understanding today that alcohol is not my real problem – my thinking is). But I’ve never heard anyone provide me a good definition of that slogan – **UNTIL TONIGHT!**

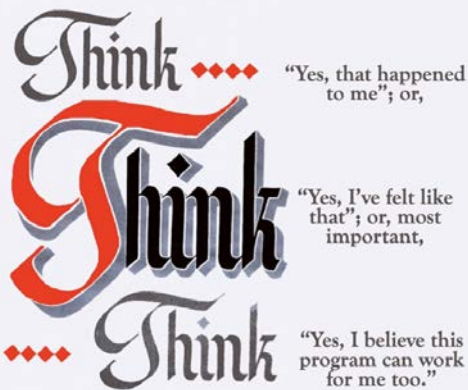
In a “meeting after the meeting” it came up in conversation. One of the women shared that she was taught that in the last paragraph of the Preface in the Big Book it says, *“If you have a drinking problem, we hope that you may pause in reading one of the forty-two personal stories and think: “Yes, that happened to me”; or, more important, “Yes, I’ve felt like that”; or, most important, “Yes, I believe this program can work for me too.”*

She went onto use those sentences in application to the phrase, **“Think Think Think”** and shared with us the following:

“If you have a drinking problem, we hope that you may pause in reading one of the forty-two personal stories and THINK: “Yes, that happened to me”; or, more important, THINK “Yes, I’ve felt like that”; or, most important, THINK “Yes, I believe this program can work for me too.” Unknown

Modified Slightly
From the Preface, *“Alcoholics Anonymous”*...

“If you have a drinking problem, we hope that you may pause in reading one of the forty-two personal stories and ...



CONTEMPLATE CUCUMBERS & PICKLES

Once you change a cucumber into a pickle, you can't change it back into a cucumber. It's the same way with our drinking: once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic.

Conley B.

The world as we have created it is a process of our Thinking. It cannot be changed without Changing our Thinking.

Albert Einstein

AAWS PRICE INCREASE

A.A. World Services increased the price of all A.A. books by \$3.00, and all other A.A. materials by 15%. effective February 1, 2026. This price will increase the cost of a Big Book from \$13.50 to \$16.50.

In 1985 the cost was \$3.50. When it was increased to \$4.00 and then \$6.00, members threw fits that it was too high, arguing the book needs to be affordable to the newcomer.

Many individuals started purchasing and giving the Book to a suffering alcoholic, newcomer, who wanted sobriety. Groups started giving the Big Book to newcomers who expressed a desire to be sober. Many of them were immediately sponsored and started using the book.

Today, the price of the book, in my opinion is atrocious. I'll continue to purchase the book and give it to newcomers. I don't know if giving the book away fulfills the Responsibility Statement. I don't know if we should give it away. But my first sponsor gave me my first Big Book.

SERIOUSLY?!

If you're going to steal a car, most likely you'll want to make an inconspicuous getaway. Reasonable enough, right? Well not for this wasted woman, who fled a hospital after stealing an ambulance - that's right, a \$120,000 vehicle known for its flashing lights and sirens.

The woman, Mindy Jones, had been arrested earlier in the night for a DUI and a hit and run when she was brought to the hospital for tests. When her nurse turned her back, she took off and hopped in an ambulance. After a 50 mile joyride in which she planned to hunt down her ex-boyfriend, Jones actually gave a drunken interview admitting her actions



High School students from around the United States can submit *distracted and drunk driving public service announcements* for the chance to win a **Stand Up to Distracted Driving Scholarship**, five at \$1000 each. Students use their creative talents to to create a 30-second television commercial promoting safe driving. The 2026 deadline is May 13, 2026. <https://www.kanoski.com/community-involvement/distracted-driving-scholarship>

2025 video of the year <https://courageouspersuaders.com/>

A drunk guy is showing friends his new apartment. The last stop is the bedroom where a big brass gong sits next to the bed.

"What's the gong for?," the friend asks.

"It's not a gong," the drunk replies. "It's a talking clock."

"How does it work?"

The guy picks up a hammer, gives the gong an ear shattering pound and steps back.

Suddenly someone on the other side of the wall screams, "FOR GOD'S SAKE, YOU ASS...It's 3:30 in the God Damn morning!"

GROAN

Why do artists seldom get drunk? Because they know where to draw the line.

A man saw his wife, slightly drunk, yelling at the tv, "Don't go in there! Don't go in the church you moron!

She was watching their wedding video.

Why are nails always drunk? Cause they keep getting hammered.

What did the bike say to the drunk who fell off?

You can't handlebars.

Did you hear about the University that did a study about how people walk when drunk? The results were staggering.

There's a drunk guy outside singing "What Makes You Beautiful" to a tree. So I opened my window and played the actual song and he just got so happy. He looked at the sky and yelled, "You're beautiful too, Jesus."

I'm pretty sure I didn't want to sleep outside in a wheelbarrow all night.

LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

This book is the most popular Grapevine book, featuring all of AA cofounder Bill W.'s writings in Grapevine. Bill was Grapevine's most prolific contributor, writing more than 150 articles from 1944 to 1970. The book contains Bill's first thoughts about AA's Twelve Traditions, his battles with depression and spiritual pride, memories of an all-night drinking spree with his dear friend Ebby and a vivid description of how he came to organize the Twelve Steps of AA.



THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Bill W.'s
Grapevine Writings

The AA phrase the 'Language of the Heart' is the title of the 1988 book which published Bill Wilson's Grapevine writings from the mid 1940's -1970. The phrase was originally used by Wilson for the title of his 1960 (July) Grapevine article which conveys the special type of communication used within Alcoholics Anonymous that facilitates a message of recovery to the alcoholic. The essay emphasizes the unique 'power of one alcoholic talking to another', which is characterized by a deep, shared understanding and compassion.

"Language of the heart" refers to a form of communication that transcends words, focusing on shared experiences, emotions and understanding. This language fosters a deep connection through mutual experiences, often found in groups like Alcoholics Anonymous.

The sharing of experience, strength, and hope from a place of humility, respect, and non-judgmental acceptance is the basis of the common bond found in the fellowship of AA.

This type of communication also expresses gratitude for recovery and is a heart centered approach between members that transcends words and can be felt and seen in the meeting rooms of AA.

CONTEMPLATE:

Love: ultimately what drew me to AA was the outreach of love to me to allow me to have hope that maybe I could have what those recovered AA members had as they shared their experiences with me. I identified with the one who shared with me and the spark of faith that I could transfer my trust in him to them burst into the tiniest of a small flame, but their laughter at themselves sucked me in and kindled the flame. It still does! I saw an artist's rendition in Alaska with one my sponsees of a "Laughing Jesus". It made quite an impression on me. It still does too.

Conley B.

THE SET ASIDE PRAYER

God, Please help me set aside everything I think I know about myself, my disease, the 12 steps, and especially You; So I may have an open mind and a new experience of all these things.

Please let me see the truth. Amen

The **Set Aside Prayer**, also known as the Lay Aside Prayer, is derived from concepts in Alcoholics Anonymous, particularly "To the Agnostic" where it emphasizes the importance of laying aside prejudices and preconceived notions. This prayer is a spiritual tool encouraging release of preconceived ideas about ourselves, our alcoholism, and our understanding of a Higher Power. This prayer encourages an open mind and a willingness to experience new attitudes. The prayer encourages individuals to approach each Step without judgment, to see the truth and to grow into the best versions of themselves.

This prayer does not have a specific date of creation. However, it is believed to have gained popularity during the "Big Book Experience" movement, which began in the

Set Aside, Cont'd page 8



WHO WAS WHO IN A.A.?

**ANNE RIPLEY
SMITH,
1891-1949**

Bill Wilson called her the “Mother of A.A.” When Bill asked her to write the Big Book chapter he would title “To Wives,” she humbly declined. But then, rather than ask his own wife, he proceeded to write the chapter himself. Lois is said to have carried that resentment for years!

But like far too many mothers and wives of her day, Anne’s many contributions to the birth of Alcoholics Anonymous were overlooked as the spotlight stayed on Bill and her husband Bob. And yet, no list of AA’s Pioneers would be complete without Anne Ripley Smith. Indeed, there may well have been no Pioneers at all were it not for her quiet work behind the scenes. *“Faith without works is dead,”* taken from the Letter of James, became her mantra.

Anne’s recovery work began in earnest in January 1933. That’s when a team of thirty Oxford Group members descended on Akron, Ohio at the request of the rubber baron Harvey Firestone. The Group had helped his son Bud get sober and the old man was grateful. The Protestant churches of Akron opened their pulpits to Team members who shared how their lives had been changed and how the lives of those listening could change too. Anne caught hold of the message two long years before Bill Wilson arrived in town searching for a drunk to fix. She faithfully attended weekly Oxford Group meetings in hopes of changing her husband whose alcoholism was growing worse by the day.

Trained as a teacher, Anne began assembling a notebook based largely on Oxford Group teachings. One AA archivist described it as containing “every single spiritual principle which became embodied in

A.A.’s Twelve Steps.” When Bill Wilson came to live with the Smiths for three months during the summer of 1935, her journal was a likely blueprint for the recovery program taking shape in Bill’s mind. For a detailed study of her journal there’s no better source than Dick B.’s book, *Anne Smith’s Journal: 1933-1939.*

Here’s a small sample from her journal as reported in Dick’s book:

Steps 1, 2, and 3:

“Surrender is a simple act of will. What do we surrender? Our life. When? At a certain definite moment. How? Oh God, manage me because I cannot manage myself.” (p.20)

“Surrender is a complete handing over of our wills to God, or reckless abandon of ourselves, all that we have, all that we think that we are, everything we hold dear, to God to do what he likes with...” (p.28-29)

Steps 4 & 5:

“Why are people so afraid to face their deepest problems? Because they think there is no answer. When they learn there is one, they will believe it can work out for them, and they will be really honest about themselves.... It is absolutely necessary to face people with the moral test.” (i.e. The Four Absolutes: Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness, and Love) (pp.29-30)

Steps 6 & 7:

“Barriers to a full surrender. 1) Is there anything I won’t give up? 2) Is there any apology I won’t make...?” (p.43)

“Obedience is one of the key-words of the Christian life. Refusal to obey blocks the channel and prevents further word from God.” (p.43)

Steps 8 & 9:

“Resentments to be faced and set right.” (p.48)

“Any restitution I won’t make?” (p.48)

Step 10:

“Continuance. Stay with the newly

Anne, continued page 8

surrendered person until he grows up and becomes a life-changer.” (p.51)

“Be willing to live a day at a time, an hour at a time.” (p.51)

Step 11:

“The basis of guidance is faith, not feeling, not analysis. Act on simple thoughts, and more will come. So long as you keep on moving on the guidance you do get, you will get more.” (p.59)



Step 12:

“A general experience of God is the first essential, the beginning. We can't give away what we haven't got. We must have a genuine contact with God in our present experience. Not an experience of the past, but an experience of the present - actual, genuine.”

From article by Father Bill W., **Remembering AA's Pioneers: Anne Ripley Smith**, November-December issue of “Two-Way Prayer” newsletter.

early 2000s. While used in meetings and Big Book Studies, this Prayer is not part of the official AA literature, is non-conference literature.

By acknowledging what we know may be limited or incorrect, we develop a sense of humility. The prayer helps us focus on the present moment, reducing anxiety and fostering a sense of peace. The prayer serves as a reminder that recovery is not only about abstaining from

Continued next column

alcohol but also emotional and spiritual healing.

Page 42, ¶ 2: "But the program of action, though entirely sensible, was pretty drastic. It meant I would have to throw several lifelong conceptions out of the window."

Page 46, ¶ 1: "We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results..."

Page 47, ¶ 1: "When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God. This applies, too, to other spiritual expressions which you find in this book. Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you."

Page 47, ¶ 4: "Besides a seeming inability to accept much on faith, we often found ourselves handicapped by obstinacy, sensitiveness, and unreasoning prejudice. Many of us have been so touchy that even casual reference to spiritual things make us bristle with antagonism. This sort of thinking had to be abandoned. Though some of us resisted, we found no great difficulty in casting aside such feelings. Faced with alcoholic destruction, we soon became as open minded on spiritual matters as we had tried to be on other questions. In this respect alcohol was a great persuader. It finally beat us into a state of reasonableness.

Alcohol is a great persuader. It beats us into a state of reasonableness.

Page 49, ¶ 2: "We, who have traveled this dubious path, beg you to lay aside prejudice, even against organized religion."

Page 58, ¶ 3: "Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely."

The Set Aside Prayer is commonly recited at the beginning of many AA meetings and during Step work and Big Book Studies, showing its integration into AA recovery.

Proof, con't from 2

Addiction Recovery Center. I did not arrive motivated or confident. I arrived desperate. That day marked the end of my active alcoholism and the beginning of recovery. For the first time, I admitted I was powerless and that my life had become unmanageable.

At SOZO, I was introduced to recovery through God and Alcoholics Anonymous. What I learned there changed everything. Recovery was not about willpower, it was about surrender.

The Twelve Steps gave me a framework for honesty, accountability, and change. A.A. gave me fellowship and connection. God gave me the strength to face the things I had spent a lifetime avoiding.

Recovery did not happen overnight but one day at a time. I learned how to tell the truth and how to ask for help. I learned to sit with discomfort instead of running from it. Through the Steps, I faced my past, made amends, and began living with integrity.

Healing brought unexpected gifts. In February of 2024, recovery gave me something I never thought I would have again. I found the love of my life. We have been together ever since and in 2025 we married. Two weeks after our wedding, my granddaughter was born.

Because of God and A.A., I get to be a papaw. Because of recovery, my granddaughter will never have to see the dark side of my alcoholism that had defined my life.

Today, I work in recovery as a case manager. I facilitate groups, assist clients with legal issues, and walk alongside men who are doing the hard work of rebuilding their lives. I also remain a student of growth. I am currently in my second semester of college working toward a master's degree in criminal justice, driven by a desire to better understand the systems that so often intersect with addiction and recovery.

I now live on the other side of the life that nearly killed me. I do not forget from where I came. What once nearly destroyed me is now the very

Proof, Con't next column

thing God uses to help others find hope.

Recovery through God and Alcoholics Anonymous works if we are willing. I am living proof.

Daniel T.

August 8, 2022

Rock House group

Conduct, con't from page 2

I was working with a sponsee when I suddenly realized I was telling her what had happened. I made myself stay calm and actually finished without drama. I was rather weirded out. When she left, thankfully not freaked out, I turned to God and asked for the strength to face this; I sent a message to my sponsor, then just sat and prayed.

When I met with my sponsor that night, I told her everything I remembered. I took responsibility, upset that I had allowed it to happen. I was at fault.

She asked me some questions, "You were drunk?"

"Yes."

"Did you say 'No?'"

"Yes, I remember saying no and pushing him. That's the last I remember."

"if you had been sober, would you have allowed yourself to be in that situation?"

"No."

"You are not at fault or responsible. He took advantage of your condition. You could not consent. He forced himself on you and is responsible, not you."

I'm not to blame. I was stunned when my sponsor said that. It has taken time to believe and accept this. He chose to rape me. I did not consent,. I'm so grateful to my sponsor!

I read the fourth step on sex conduct, pages 69 - 71. I said this beautiful prayer out loud and thanked my Higher Power for helping me remember when He knew I could handle it. I am healing. Thanks be to God, of my understanding, my Sponsor, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Anonymous

UPCOMING BUSINESS

➔ **AREA 4 ASSEMBLY, Saturday and Sunday, April 11 - 12; Holiday Inn Express & Suites-Russellville (Hotel [\(479\) 219-5152](tel:4792195152)), 300 East Harrell Drive, Russellville, Arkansas; Area 4 Assembly is a hybrid: Meeting ID: 931 0896 7121 Passcode: Box459
Area 4 Meeting 2026 dates: July October**

➔ **INTERGROUP COUNCIL OF WEST CENTRAL ARKANSAS, Sunday, April 26, 2:00 P.M., 411 Sellers, Hot Springs. Intergroup meets quarterly on the last Sunday of the month. Meeting dates 2026: July 26, October 25.**

➔ **DISTRICT 8 COMMITTEE, Sunday, June 5; 411 Sellers, Hot Springs, AR; Committees meet at 1:30, District Committee starts at 2:00 p.m. District 8 meeting dates: District 8 meets quarterly at 411 Sellers, Hot Springs, Arkansas: September 6, and December 6.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Potluck, Speaker & Birthday Celebration, Rock House Group; Last Saturday of each month: potluck at 6:00 p.m.; speaker at 7:00 p.m. April 25; May 30; June 27, 2026

Fellowship of the Spirit South, April 17th - 19th, 2026; <http://WWW.FOTSSOUTH.COM>, Lafayette, LA

Springtime in the Ozarks, April 17 - 19th, 2026; <https://springtime2026.com/events/springtime-2026/> ; Eureka Springs, AR

Grant County Group Speaker, Potluck & Fellowship, 6:00 p.m., April 26, 2026; 1511 South Rose St., Sheridan, AR

Grant County Group Speaker, Potluck & Fellowship, 6:00 p.m., July 19, 2026; 1511

**PLEASE SEND GROUP AND MEETING EVENT INFORMATION, with or without flyers, to the editor either by Text (501)984-4556 or Email nbeditor@icloud.com. Information will be published in this section.
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