

MAIA

TIPPLER

DEC 2024

Step 12 Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Tradition 12 Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Concept 12 The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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So, practicing these Steps, we had a spiritual awakening about which finally there was no question. Looking at those who were only beginning and still doubted themselves, the rest of us were able to see the change setting in. From great numbers of such experiences, we could predict that the doubter who still claimed that he hadn't got the "spiritual angle," and who still considered his well-loved A.A. group the higher power, would presently love God and call Him by name.

-12x12 p. 109

Memphis Area Intergroup Association
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memphis-aa.org

DECEMBER 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	6:45 - 7:45 pm Treatment Committee 8:00 - 9:00 pm District 21 Committee	6:45 - 7:45 pm Memphis Area Correctional Committee	4	5	6	9:00 am - 10:30 District 24 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm District 22 MAIA Open House 11 am - 1 pm
8 11:00 am - 12:00 pm District 23	9	10 6:00 - 7:00 pm Memphis Area Grapevine Committee	11 6:00 - 7:00 pm District 25	12	13	14
15	16 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm CPC/PI Committee	17	18 1:00 pm MA Phone Watch	19	20 6:45 - 7:45 pm Memphis Area Accessibility Committee	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 3:45 - 5:00 pm Memphis Area Archives Committee	30	31	1	2	3	4

DISTRICT & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

December 2 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm
Memphis Treatment Committee
Came to Believe
2865 Walnut Grove
Memphis, TN 38111

December 2 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm
District 21 Committee Meeting
Crosstown Concourse
1350 Concourse Ave #1072
Memphis, TN 38104

December 3 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm
Memphis Area Correctional Committee
Came to Believe
2865 Walnut Grove
Memphis, TN 38111

December 7 @ 9:00 am - 10:30 am
District 24- Hybrid ID 9186700041
p/w welcome
Highland Heights Presbyterian Church
2855 Morning Sun Road
Lakeland, 38016

December 7 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
District 22
Olympia Steak House
8500 Wilkinsville Road
Millington, TN 38053

December 7 @ 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
MAIA Annual Open House
3540 Summer Ave
ste 104
Memphis, TN 38122

December 8 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
District 23
Zoom password 847990

December 10 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Memphis Area Grapevine Committee
White Station Church of Christ
1106 Colonial Rd

December 11 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
District 25
Germantown United Methodist Church
2324 Germantown Road
Germantown, TN 38138

December 16 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm
CPC/PI Committee
The Way House
1203 Peabody Ave
Memphis, TN 38104

December 18 @ 1:00 pm
MA Phone Watch
3540 Summer Ave
ste 104
Memphis, TN 38122

December 20 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm
Accessibility Committee
2865 Walnut Grove
Memphis, TN 38111

December 29 @ 3:45 pm - 5:00 pm
Memphis Area Archives Committee
Two Doors Down
1578 Yorkshire



MAIA

3540 Summer Avenue
Suite 104
Memphis, TN 38122
901-454-1414

memphisarea@bellsouth.net



Monday/Friday: 8 am - 4 pm
Closed daily from 1 pm - 2 pm

The MAIA Intergroup Representatives business meeting is held on the second Sunday of every month at 1:00 p.m. Please join us on December 8, 2024 at Leawood Baptist Church, 3638 Macon Road, Memphis, TN 38122, or join on Zoom. Please call or email the office for the meeting ID & passcode.

Came to Believe

Colin R. 60yrs

Central Gardens

Carol B. 44yrs
Marion M. 16yrs
Kim K. 13yrs
David L. 28yrs

Downtown Thursday Night

Ralph M. 38yrs

Hollywood

John P. 24yrs

How it Works

Alan H. 29yrs

Unity

Kris G. 32yrs
Roy J. 32yrs
Beverly B. 22yrs
Linda Z. 13yrs
Megan F. 12yrs
Rachel R. 11yrs
Sherry SP. 7yrs
Dara M. 3yrs
Natalie W. 2yrs

WAAGL

NOVEMBER
Memphis 4yrs
December
Donna C. 1yr

BECOME A HIGH FIVER

Memphis Area Intergroup has been the link between the A.A. recovery community and the newcomer and, even as importantly, with one another since 1960. Many of us are grateful to the office for its helping hand, but have either not known that Intergroup needs our support, or our contributions have been put off due to our new busy and happy lives. "High Fivers" is a way we have found to allow members to show their gratitude by making sure the services provided by the office continues. High Fivers is a program of commitment; we commit to a \$5.00 contribution per month, either monthly, quarterly, or annually. Contact our office with details on the ways with which you can submit your monetary contributions. Intergroup, in return, will send an acknowledgment for your contributions at the end of each calendar year. These contributions are tax deductible. As an expression of gratitude, you will receive a hard copy of this newsletter in the mail each month.

SCAN TO CONTRIBUTE TO MAIA

The Seventh Tradition states: "Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." While contributions cover each group's rent and other expenses, the Seventh Tradition is essential at every level of A.A. service. It is both a privilege and a responsibility for groups and members to ensure that not only their group, but also their intergroup/central office, local services, district, area, and the General Service Office remain self-supporting. In keeping with A.A.'s Seventh Tradition of self-support, we accept contributions only from A.A. members.



A Different Kind of Holiday Spirit

Facing the Holidays with a Clear Head and a Grateful Heart

Last December was my first sober holiday season, and to say I was anxious would be an understatement. Before AA, Christmas and New Year's were just excuses to drink with a bit more flair—spiked eggnog at family gatherings, champagne at midnight, whiskey to "unwind" from it all. So, facing the holidays without a drink felt like staring down a mountain I wasn't sure I could climb.

I spent a lot of time talking with my sponsor in the weeks leading up to it. She reminded me to keep things simple, to focus on the basics: going to meetings, calling people, and taking things one day at a time. "And don't be afraid to have an exit plan," she added. If I felt overwhelmed at a holiday event, I could leave. I had permission to protect my sobriety, even if it meant being "the odd one out."

Christmas Eve arrived, and I could feel the tension building as I headed to my parents' house. I was used to my family's traditions—all the drinking, the toasts, and the awkward conversations that followed. This time, though, I showed up with my own drinks: sparkling water and some hot cocoa mix. I also took a few deep breaths before going in, reminding myself of how far I'd come.

The evening was...different. I still felt those old cravings surface as the night wore on, but instead

of grabbing a drink, I focused on other things. I helped my mom in the kitchen, something I'd never done before, and played board games with my nieces and nephews. I found myself laughing—genuinely laughing—in a way that I hadn't in a long time. When I got tense, I stepped outside to breathe and texted a friend from the program. Somehow, I made it through the night, sober and steady.

New Year's Eve was another challenge, but by then, I'd built up a little more confidence. I joined a few friends from my home group for a midnight meeting. We shared stories, drank coffee, and watched the ball drop in a room full of people who understood exactly what it meant to start a new year clean and clear-headed. I went to bed that night feeling lighter than I had in years.

Now, a year later, I'm preparing for another holiday season, and the anxiety isn't nearly as strong. I know I have tools to get through it, and I know I have people I can lean on. Sobriety has given me something I never thought I'd find during the holidays—a sense of peace, a sense of clarity. It's a different kind of holiday spirit, but one I wouldn't trade for anything.

-Sandra P.



Tradition 12: Keeping Anonymity with a Heart of Humility

As we approach the close of the year, it's fitting to reflect on Tradition 12, which reminds us that "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." On the surface, anonymity may seem straightforward—keeping our identities private to protect both ourselves and the fellowship. But Tradition 12 goes beyond confidentiality. It calls us to embrace humility and focus on the collective spirit of AA rather than individual personalities or recognition.

Think about how powerful that is, especially around the holidays when gatherings and events can bring out egos, expectations, and a little extra tension. Anonymity helps us step back from self-importance and lean into gratitude, unity, and service. It reminds us that we're all here for the same reason, no matter our differences.

One member put it this way: "When I joined AA, I was so used to relying on my personality and reputation. Anonymity didn't just protect me—it freed me. It allowed me to be just another alcoholic seeking help, without needing to prove anything. It's like putting on a warm winter coat of humility—I get to focus on my recovery without all the pressure of who I used to be or what I thought I should be."

In the spirit of Tradition 12, this season is a great time to set aside personal motives and focus on AA's principles and values. We each contribute something important, and when we choose humility over the spotlight, the program's collective strength shines through.



Quick Reflection for the Holidays

How can we apply Tradition 12 in our own lives this December? Whether it's attending a meeting, giving service, or reaching out to a struggling newcomer, ask yourself: Am I doing this for others, or am I doing it for myself? By placing principles over personalities, we allow the spirit of AA to truly thrive, sharing recovery with others in a way that is honest, humble, and deeply fulfilling.

Keeping It Light: A Tradition 12 Challenge

Consider this fun challenge: At your next meeting, try to focus on the message rather than the person delivering it. Whether it's the seasoned member with decades of wisdom or the newcomer sharing for the first time, listen closely for the principles in their words. It's a simple way to remind ourselves of Tradition 12 and keep humility at the center of our recovery this holiday season.

Concept 12: Protecting AA's Spirit with a Trusted Voice

Concept 12 holds a special place within AA's Twelve Concepts, serving as a "General Warranties" of sorts to safeguard the fellowship. It's like a built-in safety net that ensures AA remains grounded in equality, respect, and unity, promising that no action should jeopardize AA's purpose or go against its democratic spirit. The principles within Concept 12 remind us that no one person or group should have unchecked power, protecting AA from any misuse of authority or favoritism that could steer us off course.

One member shared how they saw Concept 12 at work during a local service committee meeting. "We were voting on a decision to host an event that could have raised funds but felt like it might risk breaking AA traditions. There was a lot of discussion, and some members were really passionate about pushing it forward. But one of the older members reminded us of Concept 12's warranties and the importance of keeping AA's principles intact. They pointed out that this concept is there to protect our fellowship from becoming like a business or losing sight of our primary purpose. By the end of the meeting, we all took a step back and agreed to focus on what served our primary mission of helping others rather than taking on extra risks."

Concept 12 gives us a powerful reminder that AA's unity and integrity depend on our collective conscience, not on individual agendas or quick decisions. During the holidays, with all the hustle and bustle, it can be tempting to put goals and excitement above the principles that keep AA steady. But like this member learned in their group, Concept 12 guides us to always act with humility and care, making sure that AA's principles come first.

As we close out another year, let's keep this spirit of mutual respect and humility alive, remembering that AA thrives when everyone's voice is honored and our primary purpose remains at the heart of our actions.

Holiday Tips for Staying Sober and Serene

The holiday season can be joyful, but it can also bring challenges for those in recovery. Here are some practical tips to help you stay grounded, grateful, and, most importantly, sober through December and into the New Year:

Bookend with Meetings

Kick off each holiday event by going to a meeting beforehand, and then attend another afterward if possible. Surrounding yourself with your AA family can remind you of your commitment to sobriety and help you stay steady through any temptations.

Have an Exit Plan

Family gatherings and holiday parties can get stressful. Drive yourself if you can or set up a signal with a sober buddy if you need to leave early. Protecting your sobriety always comes first.

Keep Your Own Drinks Handy

Bring a favorite non-alcoholic beverage with you, like sparkling water or a festive mocktail. Having a drink in hand can help you feel less "on the spot" and gives you control over what you're consuming.

Practice Saying "No"

Rehearse how you'll respond if someone offers you a drink. A simple "No, thank you" is often all you need, but practicing your response can help ease any anxiety about saying it.

Use Your Phone a Friend Option

Stay connected to your sponsor or a sober friend who can offer quick support. You're not alone, and a quick call or text can make a big difference when cravings or stress hit.

With a plan, a little support, and a lot of self-compassion, you can stay sober through the holidays and celebrate another day of recovery. Here's to a peaceful, joy-filled season!

Finding the Gift of Step 12

Finding Purpose and Connection Through Service in the Holiday Season

Last year around this time, I was feeling unusually low. It was my second sober holiday season, and although I had a steady program and good friends in AA, the season left me feeling hollow. The holiday lights, the music, even the little gatherings—they all reminded me of the ways I used to “celebrate.” Back then, Christmas was just an excuse to drink a little (or a lot) more openly, and New Year’s? Well, that was a night made for disappearing into a bottle. But sobriety had stripped away my old ways of finding excitement, and I hadn’t yet discovered how to fill that space with something meaningful.

I shared my feelings with my home group one night, admitting that I was struggling with the season. After the meeting, an old-timer pulled me aside. “Sounds like you need a little dose of Step 12,” he said, giving me a wink. I nodded along, trying to act like I got it, but I was secretly lost.

Seeing my confusion, he elaborated, “Look, the holidays are tough for a lot of us. Why don’t you lead the Christmas Eve meeting? Being of service takes the focus off yourself, and you might find that it gives you a bit of that holiday spirit you’re looking for.”

I was nervous about it, to be honest. Sure, I’d chaired a few meetings here and there, but leading one on Christmas Eve felt like a big responsibility. Part of me was worried no one would show up, and another part was worried too many people would. But I trusted this guy’s advice. He’d been through a lot in his years, and his words always seemed to cut right to the heart of things.

So, I agreed. On Christmas Eve, I arrived early to unlock the doors and set up the room. A couple of other group members came in to help decorate a bit. We set up a tiny Christmas tree and hung a string of lights around the room. Someone even brought cookies and cocoa to share. By the time people started arriving, the room looked as festive as an AA meeting could, and I felt a small flicker of holiday cheer just seeing everyone’s faces.

As the meeting started, I took a deep breath and opened up about how I’d been feeling—how the holidays stirred up nostalgia for the old life, but how I was struggling to find meaning now without the drinking. I admitted how grateful I was for the fellowship but how lonely the season could still feel. As I spoke, I looked around the room, realizing I wasn’t the only one nodding along. There were newcomers, some of them visibly anxious, and long-timers with that quiet wisdom, just listening.

One of the newcomers shared next, saying it was his first sober holiday season in 15 years. He’d come to the meeting because he couldn’t face his family without a drink in his hand. He said he was afraid of what they’d say if they knew how bad things had gotten, afraid of their questions, and afraid of being the only one there who wasn’t drinking. He said he’d only come to the meeting because he was desperate.

The honesty in his words hit me hard. I remembered my first sober Christmas, how raw it had felt, how I’d wrestled with the shame and the fear of facing people I’d disappointed so many times. After he finished, I walked over and gave him my phone number, letting him know he could call if he needed someone to talk to, day or night.

As the meeting went on, people shared their own struggles with the holidays, with family, with loneliness. People opened up about their gratitude for the group, for each other, and for the tools that had kept them sober, even when times were hard. There was laughter, a few tears, and a sense of togetherness that filled the room in a way I hadn’t expected.

When the meeting wrapped up, the newcomer I’d spoken to came over and thanked me. He said it was the first Christmas Eve he’d spent sober in a decade and that being around others who understood helped him see he wasn’t alone. He left with a hopeful smile, and for the first time that season, I felt an overwhelming sense of purpose.

That night, I locked up with a new perspective on Step 12. Being of service, sharing what had been given to me—that was the real gift. It turned out that the emptiness I’d felt wasn’t a lack of holiday “cheer” but a lack of meaning, of connection, of purpose. And through Step 12, I had found all those things.

This year, I’ve signed up to chair the holiday meetings again, and I’m looking forward to it. Step 12 isn’t just about staying sober for ourselves; it’s about giving back and making sure others don’t have to face the tough times alone. For me, it’s the greatest gift I could receive—and give back.

-Terry H.



“The Tippler” is a free monthly publication, and will be emailed to anyone interested. However, if you'd like to receive a copy via USPS, a contribution of \$5 monthly, or \$60 annually, helps defray the costs involved. Fill out the form below and , along with your contribution, mail to the above address. We thank you!

Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip Code _____

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