

MAIA

# TIPPLER

MARCH 2025

**Step 3** Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

**Tradition 3** Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

**Concept 3** To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.

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*“So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God makes that possible.”*

*-Big Book, page 62*

Memphis Area Intergroup Association  
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# MARCH 2025

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

## DISTRICT & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

March 1 @ 9:00 am - 10:30 am  
District 24-Hybrid ID-9186700041  
Highland Heights Presbyterian Church  
2855 Morning Sun Road  
Lakeland, 38016

March 1 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm  
District 22  
Olympia Steak House  
3563 Thomas St  
Millington, TN 38053

March 3 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm  
Memphis Treatment  
Committee  
Came to Believe  
2865 Walnut Grove  
Memphis, TN 38111

March 3 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
District 21 Committee  
Meeting  
Crosstown Concourse  
1350 Concourse Ave #1072  
Memphis, TN 38104

March 4 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm  
Memphis Area Correctional Committee  
Came to Believe  
2865 Walnut Grove  
Memphis, TN 38111

March 9 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm  
District 23  
Zoom password 847990

March 11 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
Memphis Area  
Grapevine Committee  
White Station Church of Christ  
1106 Colonial Rd

March 12 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
District 25  
Germantown United Methodist Church  
2324 Germantown Road  
Germantown, TN 38138

March 17 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm  
CPC/PI Committee  
Shady Grove Presbyterian  
5530 Shady Grove  
Memphis, TN 38104

March 21 @ 6:45 pm - 7:45 pm  
Accessibility Committee  
2865 Walnut Grove  
Memphis, TN 38111

March 30 @ 3:45 pm - 5:00 pm  
Memphis Area Archives Committee  
Two Doors Down  
1578 Yorkshire



# MAIA

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Monday/Friday: 8 am - 4 pm Closed for  
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 March 9, 2025 at Leawood Baptist Church, 3638 Macon Road, Memphis, TN 38122, or join on Zoom. Please call or email the office for the passcode. (ID835-026-08)

## 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.



### Central Gardens

Matt C. 21yrs

### Downtown Thursday

Dale S. 52yrs

### Hollywood

Eddie V. 36yrs  
Teresa E. 16yrs  
Bill M. 32yrs

### Rule 62

Charley M. 19yrs

### Solutions

Basil W. 56yrs  
Sam W. 29yrs

### Traditions

Joe W. 50yrs  
John M. 34yrs  
Mark W. 22yrs  
Denise L. 13yrs  
Loretta C. 9yrs

# Concept 3: The Right to Decide—Empowering Trusted Servants

In Alcoholics Anonymous, Concept 3 is all about trust and responsibility. It states:

”To ensure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional ‘Right of Decision.’”

Simply put, this means that when we elect or appoint someone to a service position, we trust them to make informed decisions without needing group approval on every single matter. It allows AA to function efficiently and prevents endless debates over minor details.

## Why Concept 3 Matters

Imagine if every homegroup had to vote on every minor detail—what type of coffee to buy, how much paper to use for printing schedules, whether to adjust the thermostat. Instead, we elect trusted servants and allow them to handle these responsibilities. Concept 3 gives them the ability to make practical decisions while still being accountable to the group.

## A Real-Life Example

A few years ago, I was elected treasurer of my homegroup. I took the job seriously, tracking every dollar. Then our coffee maker broke. I knew we needed a replacement, but did I have the right to just buy one?

Then I remembered Concept 3. As treasurer, I was trusted to make reasonable financial decisions. A \$30 coffee maker? That was well within my responsibility. I bought it, and at the next meeting, I let the group know. Nobody was upset—people were actually grateful we didn’t have to debate it for half an hour.

## How This Applies to Sobriety

Concept 3 isn’t just about how AA runs—it applies to our own recovery. When I was newly sober, I doubted my ability to make decisions. My sponsor helped me see that recovery, like service, requires faith—faith in myself, faith in the process, and faith in a Higher Power.

Over time, I learned to make decisions without seeking approval from everyone. I started trusting myself, just like we trust our service members. When I made mistakes? I took responsibility, learned, and moved forward—just like AA does.

## The Balance of Trust and Accountability

Concept 3 isn’t about unchecked power. It’s about balance. Trusted servants have the right to decide, but they also stay accountable to the group. If a GSR or treasurer starts making big decisions without input, the group can—and should—step in.

It’s a system built on mutual respect:

- The group trusts its elected servants to handle the details.
- The trusted servants stay accountable to the group’s overall conscience.

## Concept 3 in Action

- A meeting secretary adds a newcomer pamphlet to the literature table without waiting for a group vote.
- A GSR votes at the area assembly based on their understanding of the group’s conscience.
- A convention committee chair books a speaker within budget, without needing constant approval.

All of these show Concept 3 working as it should—allowing service members to serve while staying accountable.

## Final Thoughts

Concept 3 reminds us that trust is essential, both in service and in sobriety. When we allow people to carry out their roles without micromanaging, things run smoothly. The same is true for our own recovery—when we start trusting ourselves, our Higher Power, and the process, life gets a lot easier.

So whether you’re in a service position or just trying to make decisions in sobriety, remember: you have the right to decide. Just make sure you’re deciding with honesty, responsibility, and the principles of AA in mind.

# No Strings Attached

When I walked into my first AA meeting, I was looking for a reason to leave. It was a chilly March evening, the kind where the dampness settles in your bones. I hadn't had a drink in three days, and my hands wouldn't stop shaking. The smell of burnt coffee filled the room, mixing with the scent of old books and cigarette smoke clinging to people's coats.

A woman near the door handed me a little booklet and smiled. "First time?" she asked.

I nodded, barely making eye contact.

"Keep coming back," she said.

I wanted to tell her not to get ahead of herself.

The only reason I was there was because my sister had given me an ultimatum—AA or no more crashing on her couch. So there I was, sitting in a cold metal chair, waiting for someone to tell me I didn't belong.

A man at the front began speaking. He had a slow, deliberate way of talking, like someone who had spent years thinking before he spoke. "Tonight, we're talking about Tradition Three," he said. "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking."

I smirked. That seemed too easy. I didn't need a sponsor? Didn't need to pass a test? Didn't need to confess all my sins?

I wasn't sure I had a desire to stop drinking. I just had a desire for my life to not be such a mess.

People began sharing, and I sat there, half-listening, half-counting the cracks in the linoleum floor. One guy, who looked like he'd been in a bar fight with life itself, said, "I came in here homeless, drunk, and angry. I figured they'd kick me out. But they didn't. They told me I belonged. And that saved my life."

Another woman shared about being an atheist and how she thought she'd have to believe in God to be part of AA. "But nobody gave me a questionnaire at the door," she laughed. "They just told me to keep showing up."

Something about that stuck with me.

When the meeting ended, I grabbed a cup of coffee that tasted like it had been sitting for hours, just to have something to do with my hands. The woman who had greeted me earlier came over.

"What'd you think?" she asked.

I shrugged. "I don't know if I really belong here."

She nodded like she'd heard that before. "Do you want to stop drinking?"

I thought about it. Did I? Or did I just want to want to? Was that enough?

"I don't know," I admitted.

She smiled. "Good enough."

That was the moment AA cracked open a door I didn't even know was there.

For weeks, I kept coming back. I didn't share. I didn't commit to anything. I just listened. I heard about people who had lost everything—jobs, families, their own self-respect. People who had sworn they weren't alcoholics because they only drank beer, or only drank on weekends, or had never had a DUI. People who, like me, had walked in expecting to be turned away.

But nobody was turned away.

One night, about a month in, I finally raised my hand. "I'm not sure if I really belong here," I started, my voice unsteady. "I haven't lost everything. I still have my job. I still have a place to live."

A guy across the room chuckled. "Yet," he said.

The room erupted in knowing laughter. Not cruel, just familiar.

The woman from my first night—the one who had welcomed me in—leaned forward. "Do you think alcohol is causing problems in your life?"

I swallowed. "Yeah."

"Then you belong here."

That was the night I stopped waiting for someone to tell me I wasn't good enough for AA. It took me longer to admit I was an alcoholic, but I kept coming back anyway.

Tradition Three is simple. It doesn't ask for credentials, good behavior, or a perfect track record. It just asks for a desire—no matter how small—to stop drinking.

That small desire saved my life.

-Roberta S.

# THE ONLY REQUIREMENT

Tradition 3 states:

“The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.”

It’s simple but powerful. AA doesn’t have membership fees, background checks, or entrance exams. You don’t have to prove anything or be a model citizen. If you have a desire to stop drinking—even a tiny one—you belong.

Here’s a quick checklist to help us reflect on Tradition 3 and how we apply it in our groups and personal recovery:

## For the Group:

- Do we welcome every newcomer without judgment, regardless of their background or circumstances?
- Do we let go of personal opinions about who “should” or “shouldn’t” be here?
- Are we mindful of how our words and actions might make someone feel unwelcome?
- Do we avoid setting conditions for membership, like requiring a sponsor or a certain amount of sobriety to participate?
- Do we remind newcomers that no one can kick them out of AA—only they can decide if they belong?

## For the Individual:

- Do I ever feel like I don’t “deserve” to be in AA? (Hint: If you have a desire to stop drinking, you do.)
- Do I let go of judgment when I see someone struggling with relapse or different beliefs than mine?
- Do I remember that AA is for anyone who wants to stop drinking—not just people who meet my idea of what an alcoholic looks like?
- Am I offering support to newcomers, even when they don’t seem “ready” or “serious” about sobriety?
- Do I remind myself that AA worked for me because people welcomed me, not because I had to prove myself?

Tradition 3 is what keeps AA open to all who suffer from alcoholism. No tests, no exclusions—just a simple desire to stop drinking. And sometimes, that small desire is enough to save a life.

## Significant March Milestones in AA History

March 1, 1941

The Saturday Evening Post publishes Jack Alexander's article “Alcoholics Anonymous: Freed Slaves of Drink, Now They Free Others,” bringing national recognition to AA and leading to a significant increase in membership.

March 30, 1947:

The first official AA meeting in Great Britain takes place in London, marking the international expansion of the fellowship.

March 1941:

The first AA group in New Haven, Connecticut, is established, reflecting the fellowship's growth in the United States.

March 1942:

The first prison AA group is formed at San Quentin, highlighting AA's outreach to incarcerated individuals.

March 1945:

The “March of Time” film about AA is produced and supervised by E.M. Jellinek, contributing to public awareness of the fellowship.

March 1946:

The Jefferson Barracks AA Group in Missouri is formed, believed to be the first AA group established within a military installation.

March 25, 1965:

Richmond Walker, author of “Twenty-Four Hours a Day,” passes away at age 72, leaving behind a legacy that continues to support AA members.

# The Last House on the Block

It wasn't supposed to happen to me. That was my first thought when I walked into an AA meeting for the first time. I wasn't supposed to be 'that' guy—the one who couldn't handle his drinking, the one who needed help. I had a good job, a house, a car. I wasn't living under a bridge. But I was dying inside, and I knew it.

For years, I had a system. I drank after work, never before. I stuck to liquor stores on the other side of town so the clerks wouldn't remember me. I rotated excuses for why I looked like hell in the mornings—sinuses, bad sleep, stress. I drank to unwind, to celebrate, to mourn. I drank when I was lonely, and I drank when I was surrounded by friends. At some point, I started drinking just to feel normal.

Then the system started breaking down. The rules I set for myself began to shift. I'd have a few at lunch, just to take the edge off. I started calling in sick more often. My hands shook in the mornings, and I learned that if I poured just a little vodka into my coffee, I could stop the shakes long enough to make it to work. I stopped making it to work at all.

The night before my last drink, I was standing in my driveway, staring at my own front door like it belonged to someone else. I had no idea how I got there. My car was parked sideways, one wheel up on the curb, the driver's side door wide open. The last thing I remembered was being at a bar across town. My stomach twisted with something worse than a hangover—panic. Had I hit someone? Did I say something I couldn't take back?

I walked inside and caught my reflection in the hallway mirror. I looked like a man I didn't recognize—bloated, eyes yellowed, collar stretched and stained. I felt the

familiar wave of self-loathing rise up in me. I needed another drink to quiet it.

But something stopped me. I don't know what it was—maybe that tiny shred of dignity I hadn't completely drowned. Maybe I was just too exhausted. But instead of reaching for the bottle, I reached for my phone.

I don't remember dialing, but I remember my friend Danny's voice on the other end. He had been sober for years, and though I never said it out loud, I envied him for it. "I think I need help," I mumbled, barely getting the words out.

He didn't sound surprised. He just told me to meet him at a church the next evening. "There's a meeting at seven," he said. "Come early, I'll be outside."

I didn't want to go, but I didn't know what else to do. I had run out of plans, out of excuses, out of places to hide. So I showed up.

When I walked in, I felt like everyone knew. Like they could smell the booze on me, like they could see the wreckage of my life just by looking at me. I kept my head down and sat in the back, trying to disappear.

But then people started talking. They weren't talking 'at' me, but somehow, they were telling my story. The details were different, but the feelings were the same—the shame, the loneliness, the terror of facing life without a drink in my hand. These people weren't saints, and they weren't phonies. They were drunks, just like me. And somehow, they had found a way out.

After the meeting, Danny clapped me on the back and said, "Well? You coming back tomorrow?"

I wanted to say no. I wanted to run. But I heard myself say, "Yeah. I think so."

That was years ago. Today, my life isn't perfect, but it's mine again. I have a job I show up for, a car I park straight, and a front door I actually walk through. Most importantly, I don't have to be afraid of my own reflection anymore.

I thought AA was the last house on the block. Turns out, it was the first real home I ever had.

-Irving G.

**FEBRUARY 2025  
GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS**

	TOTAL		
	FEB 2025	FEB 2024 (PY)	JAN - FEB, 2025 (YTD)
Any Length Group	0.00	35.00	0.00
Came to Believe Group	0.00	0.00	300.00
Central Gardens Group	100.00	50.00	100.00
Collierville Group	0.00	0.00	399.39
Earlybird	480.00	1,200.00	480.00
Friends of Bill W	200.00	0.00	200.00
Germantown Happy	0.00	0.00	1,500.00
Germantown Noon	325.00	180.00	325.05
Grace in the Grove	0.00	0.00	194.47
Horn Lake	0.00	0.00	5.00
Men of Recovery	0.54	0.00	0.54
New Start	25.00	25.00	50.00
Out-of-Towners Fellowship Group	0.00	0.00	135.00
Pleasant Hill	0.00	302.15	293.02
Primary Purpose	0.00	50.00	0.00
Real Deal	0.00	5.00	0.00
Rule-62	0.00	162.50	0.00
Second Chance	50.00	50.00	100.00
SERCYPAA	0.00	2,995.41	0.00
Seriously Sober	0.00	0.00	15.61
Shady Ladies	300.00	300.00	300.00
Sober Journey	0.00	0.00	100.00
Solutions Group	0.00	0.00	840.00
South Memphis	0.00	10.00	0.00
The Nooner	225.75	119.75	510.25
The Wynne Group	0.00	0.00	5.74
Three Legged Stool	0.00	50.00	0.00
Traditions	50.00	0.00	50.00
Two Doors Down	300.00	300.00	600.00
Unity Group	0.00	147.47	145.84
WAAGL	50.00	100.00	100.00
West Memphis Group	40.00	0.00	80.00
Winchester	0.00	0.00	194.06
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,146.29</b>	<b>\$6,082.28</b>	<b>\$7,023.97</b>

# OVERHEARD IN A MEETING

“My best thinking got me here.”

“AA doesn’t open the gates of heaven to let me in, it opens the gates of hell to let me out.”

“I didn’t lose control of my drinking—I gave it away.”

“You don’t have to believe in God to get sober, but it helps to believe you’re not Him.”

“I came for the drinking and stayed for the living.”

“The good news is you get your feelings back. The bad news is you get your feelings back.”

“Willingness is doing it even when you don’t want to.”

“There’s no situation so bad that a drink won’t make it worse.”

“Alcohol gave me wings, then it took away the sky.”

“I didn’t think AA would work for me. Turns out, I was right—I had to do the work myself.”

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“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!

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