

# LITTLE WHITE HOUSE NEWSLETTER

## Dakota Alano Society

3920 Rahn Road Eagan, MN 55122

651-452-2921 (during meeting times)

[www.dasinc.org](http://www.dasinc.org)

FEBRUARY 2013

### 24 Hour a day:

MPLS Intergroup Hotline: 952-922-0880

St. Paul Intergroup Hotline: 651-227-5502

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Sunday, February 10th, 6:00 p.m.

*Take a meeting to Hastings Detox*

Meet in the parking lot at 6:00 p.m.  
to car pool to Hastings

### Sunday, February 17th, 6:00 p.m.

*February Board of Directors Meeting*

Main room at the White House

Squad leaders are encouraged to attend

All members are welcome to attend

Dakota Alano's Newest Meeting:

### Dual Recovery Anonymous (DRA) Meeting

Saturdays at 4:00 p.m.

The purpose of the dual recovery meeting is to help one another achieve dual recovery, prevent relapse, and to carry the message of recovery to others who experience a dual disorder. A dual disorder occurs when a person is affected by both chemical/alcohol dependency **and** an emotional or psychiatric illness. The Dual Recovery Program is based on the principles of the Twelve Steps and the personal experiences of men and women in dual recovery.

### Sponsorship Workshop

**Saturday, Feb. 9th, 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

Hope Church, 7132 Portland Ave S. Richfield, MN  
6 Speakers, Lunch Included, Donations Accepted

### Trusted Servant Leadership Training

**Saturday, Feb. 9th, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

Friendship Church, 12800 Marystown Rd.

Shakopee, MN 55379

Morning and afternoon sessions, Lunch Included  
7th Tradition Donations Accepted

For flyers on the above 2 events visit: [www.area36.org](http://www.area36.org)  
Click on "The Area Calendar" on the right side menu



## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

### **The Saturday 6:00 p.m. Beginner's Meeting is always looking for speakers.**

*If you would be willing to share a short version  
of your story please sign up on the sheet posted  
on the door to the kitchen, or attend the  
meeting and talk to the Trusted Servant.*

*(You can do it, it's easy! No podium, no microphone,  
you don't even have to stand up in front)*

### **The Board of Directors is looking for a new Webmaster to help keep the DAS website up to date.**

*If you are interested or would like more  
information, please put a note in the board  
mailbox in the kitchen at the White House,  
or contact: Ellen J. ([emjusten@yahoo.com](mailto:emjusten@yahoo.com))*

[www.dasinc.org](http://www.dasinc.org)

## CLEANING HOUSE

**Did you know** that each meeting group is responsible for a thorough cleaning of the White House during one month of the year?

### Upcoming Cleaning Schedule

February	Thursday	8:00 p.m. Al-Anon
	Saturday	4:00 p.m. DRA
March	Friday	6:00 p.m. AA
	Friday	8:00 p.m. AA
April	Wednesday	7:00 a.m. AA
	Saturday	11:00 AA

The suggested time for monthly cleaning is before or after your regular group meeting time. Allow adequate time to complete the tasks listed below.

Cleaning supplies are kept under the sinks in the kitchen and both bathrooms. The House has two vacuum cleaners, and there is additional cleaning equipment in the front entry closet. If you know your group is going to clean and supplies are needed, please call Brad C (612-270-8238).

### Monthly House Cleaning consists of:

- Vacuum all carpets:  
upstairs, downstairs, and stairway
- Vacuum and/or shake out mats in kitchen, hallway and bathroom
- Vacuum & damp mop linoleum floor (with Swiffer mop in front entry closet)
- Clean both bathrooms
- Clean kitchen sink and counter tops
- Wash all coffee pots
- Wipe down all tabletops in all rooms

***The Board and all members of the Dakota Alano Society appreciate each group's efforts to keep the White House clean. Thank You !!***

## REGARDING HOUSE SECURITY

The Board has had ongoing concerns about the House being accessed during non-meeting hours. The Board requests that Squad Leaders be mindful of their responsibilities regarding the security of the House:

- Keys to the Alano House are the responsibility of the Squad Leader.
- **Do not give or lend your key to any other member.** Contact a Board member in advance of your meeting if you need someone to open or lock the House for you. Or there may be a Board member who attends your meeting regularly. Ask them to open the house for you.
- Open the House no more than one hour prior to the start of your meeting.
- Lock the House up no later than one hour after the close of your meeting.
- **Check all 3 doors when leaving the house.**
- Each group is entitled to only one key and will be responsible for the cost of a replacement key. The current charge for a new key is \$30.00.
- The following Board members have volunteered to open the House if a Squad Leader is unable to:  

Dan C 651-238-7824

Julie O 651-497-1264
- There is a complete list of Board members and their phone numbers on the bulletin board in the kitchen.

If you are a Squad Leader who is unable to meet the above requests, please help your group to select a replacement Squad Leader. ***Your cooperation is very much appreciated.***

## STEP TWO

**Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**

To clergymen, doctors, family, and friends, the alcoholic who means well and tries hard is a heartbreaking riddle. To most A.A.'s he is not. There are too many of us who have been just like him, and have found the riddle's answer. This answer has to do with the quality of faith rather than it's quantity. This has been our blind spot. We supposed we had humility when really we hadn't. We supposed we had been serious about religious practices when, upon honest appraisal, we found we had been only superficial. Or going to the other extreme, we had wallowed in emotionalism and had mistaken it for true religious feeling. In both cases, we had been asking something for nothing. The fact was we really hadn't cleaned house so that the grace of God could enter us and expel the obsession. In no deep or meaningful sense had we ever taken stock of ourselves, made amends to those we had harmed, or freely given to any other human being without any demand for reward. We had not even prayed rightly. We had always said, "Grant me my wishes" instead of "Thy will be done." The love of God and man we understood not at all. Therefore we remained self-deceiving, and so incapable of receiving enough grace to restore us to sanity.

Few indeed are the practicing alcoholics who have any idea how irrational they are, or seeing their irrationality, can bear to face it. Some will be willing to term themselves "problem drinkers," but cannot endure the suggestion that they are in fact mentally ill. They are abetted in this blindness by a world which does not understand the difference between sane drinking and alcoholism. "Sanity" is defined as "soundness of mind." Yet no alcoholic, soberly analyzing his destructive behavior, whether the destruction fell on the dining-room furniture or his own moral fiber, can claim "soundness of mind" for himself.

Therefore, Step Two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this Step. True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith and every A.A. meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to Him.

*From Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pgs 32-33.*

## TRADITION TWO

**For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscious. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.**

Sooner or later, every AA comes to depend upon a Power greater than himself. He finds that the God of his understanding is not only a source of strength, but also a source of positive direction. Realizing that some fraction of that infinite resource is now available, his life takes on an entirely different complexion. He experiences a new inner security together with a sense of destiny and purpose as he has never known before. As each day passes, our AA reviews his mistakes and vicissitudes. He learns from daily experience what his remaining character defects are and becomes ever more willing that they be removed. In this fashion he improves his conscious contact with God.

Every AA group follows this same cycle of development. We are coming to realize that each group, as well as each individual, is a special entity, not quite like any other. Though AA groups are basically the same, each group does have its own special atmosphere, its own particular state of development. We believe that every AA group has a conscience. It is the collective conscience of its own membership. Daily experience informs and instructs this conscience. The group begins to recognize its own defects of character and, one by one, these are removed or lessened. As this process continues, the group becomes better able to receive right direction for its own affairs.

Trial and error produces group experience, and out of corrected experience comes custom. When a customary way of doing things is definitely proved to be best, then that custom forms into AA Tradition. The Greater Power is then working through a clear group conscience. We humbly hope and believe that our growing AA Tradition will prove to be the will of God for us.

*Excerpted from Language of the Heart. Copyright © 1988 The AA Grapevine, Inc. Reprinted in the A.A. Lifeline, January 2012*

## STEP TWO

*This article is contributed by Ellen J. and was originally compiled from a selection of recovery resources for the Saturday 6pm beginners meeting.*

This month we consider Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than us could restore us to sanity. The relevant reading for this is Chapter 4 of the Big Book.

If you have difficulty with the idea of an Higher Power, here are some things that helped us. Ask yourself, as the Big Book tells us, Am I even willing to believe in a Power greater than me? Then you can adopt what you think that a Higher Power might be, and make a start. Many people adopt the power of AA - whatever you think might be helping all of us in this group now to stay sober.

Something else that is true for some of us, is that we had a faith when we came to AA, but struggled to accept that the God we believed in was interested in us and really does want us to be sober and happy, joyous and free. What we did was to abandon this old, harsh God and find a new Higher Power that does care for us. Again the power of AA would fit the bill here.

So, ask yourself, as the Big Book tells us: Do I believe, or am I even willing to believe that there is a Power greater than myself that can restore me to sanity? If you can say yes, then you have taken Step Two.

What do we do now? The experience outlined in the Big Book makes it clear that it is not enough to simply believe that there is a Higher Power that can help us. We have to cooperate, to do certain things that will allow a Higher Power to help us follow spiritual principles. That's what the rest of the steps are about. One of our main suggestions is to get a sponsor. We had to find someone who had done the steps and seemed happy in his/her sobriety. When we had one, we phoned him or her regularly, and for most of us this meant daily calls.

There is a good reason for this daily contact. We have to learn to trust God, or as the literature says, follow the dictates of a Higher Power. Now, the sponsor is not God. But in many situations in our lives, the application of the principles of the program is not clear, or is very new to us. The sponsor has direct experience of applying these spiritual principles and the light of this experience can show us how to employ them in our own affairs. It will be very difficult for us to trust in the program and the Higher Power unless we can trust our sponsors first. The daily calls help us to develop that trust through regular contact. We needed someone from whom we wanted to hear the whole truth, even if sometimes it was difficult to accept. By following our sponsor's suggestions and experiencing the change, we start to understand that spiritual principles are not rules to restrict us, but guidelines for living that show us how to live a happy life. By practicing trust in our sponsor, we learn to trust the source of these guidelines: the AA program and the Higher Power.

There is another reason for us to have regular contact with sponsors: as alcoholics our ability to rationalize dishonesty and selfishness seems at times almost unlimited. We are champions at hiding a bad motive behind a good one. The sponsor can very helpful in showing us when we are doing this.



**STEP TWO (continued)**

Here are the rest of our daily suggestions that are the foundation upon which we build our progress through the steps. All twelve are often summarized as coming into three categories:

**Trust God; Clean House; Help Others**

The first few suggestions come under the heading of **Trust God**. Now that we have a Higher Power, we can develop a trust by asking for help and trying to do what is right.

- In the morning, we pray to our Higher Power: Please keep me sober and look after me today.
- At night, we thank our Higher Power for looking after us.
- As already mentioned, we phone our sponsors, who will help us to practice spiritual principles in all our affairs.
- We write a gratitude list at the end of each day, and thank our Higher Power for the gifts given to us. For example: sober, bed to sleep in, roof over my head, food for today, clothes to wear and so on. We can write down any little events specific to that day. We don't wait to feel grateful before we write them down. Many then review that list the next day as part of their morning prayers. The gratitude list helps us to fight self-pity. It is also written evidence of the good things that God is bringing into our lives. We are being looked after!
- Each day we read the book Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book). Try a page or two each day, more if you want to. It is always good to read the principles of the program first-hand to help us in our daily lives and to reinforce our conviction that what we are being told to do is what the first 100 members did. It is a way of seeing that our sponsor really is giving us what the book says.

Next, **Clean House**. This is a reference to getting rid of the wreckage of the past: the fear, anxiety, resentment, anger, and guilt that we have brought with us, and caused in others, as a consequence of our alcoholic lifestyles. Steps 4-9 particularly will deal with that deeply and powerfully. But in the mean time we can do the following:

- If frightened or anxious, we say the Serenity Prayer until we feel better.
- If angry or annoyed by anyone, we pray for him or her, again, until we feel better.

And finally, under the heading of **Help Others**, although we only have limited experience of the program there are already things we can do to help other alcoholics.

- Commit to two weekly meetings and when possible get in two service commitments. At any meeting pitch in and be helpful: welcome visitors and new members, help tidy/set up. Just being a familiar face at a meeting is reassuring to the newcomer who comes to a meeting for a second time. At least the newcomer knows that it is still working for someone else.
- Phone a couple of newcomers (people newer than you) each day. And ask them how they are doing. You don't need to be an expert on AA or the program. All we have to do is listen and share our experience and perhaps offer some encouragement. Listening to others is a great way to stop thinking about ourselves and to keep from falling into self-pity.