

The Great Northerner

NEWSLETTER

Edition 8 Issue 2, February, 2026

Welcome to The Great Northerner, a newsletter set up to keep you in the know of upcoming activities, birthdays, meetings, and general information. To subscribe to this newsletter is easy, just email "subscribe" to fsjintergroup@gmail.com it's that easy.



The Joe & Charlie Collection

Joe & Charlie have led thousands through the process of working the 12-Steps



Joe McQuany &

Charlie Parmley

The Joe & Charlie Big Book Studies

In 1973 Joe McQuany introduced Charlie Parmley as the AA speaker at an Al-Anon Convention. Joe and Charlie soon discovered that they both shared a love for the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. Traveling between their homes to discuss the Big Book became a regular event. Eventually others were invited to join these discussions and in 1977 they met together as a group in Tulsa Oklahoma. From this event they were invited to share a program on the Big Book at one of the participants' home AA group in Lawton Oklahoma. This presentation was recorded and the tapes began to be circulated. By 1980 Joe and Charlie had presented the workshop eight times.

At the 1980 International AA Convention in New Orleans, **Wesley Parrish**, an impassioned Big Book lover from Pompano Beach, organized a lunch for 1,500 AA's from all over the world and gave away 100 sets of the talks from the 1st 1977 Joe and Charlie seminar as door prizes. His intent was to spark interest in spreading the seminar across the country. To do so he assigned the seating and placed the tapes under the chairs of individuals he felt would be the most likely to organize this type of event in their home areas. Invitations exploded and within a couple of years, Joe and Charlie were presenting about 36 studies a year worldwide. Studies have been given in most of the states and Canadian provinces. Australia, New Zealand, England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and the Netherlands all hosted the Big Book Study seminars with Joe & Charlie. As Joe McQuany aged he was not able to keep the taxing schedule. In stepped Joe McCoy, an early participant, and filled the void. Presented below are multiple versions of their weekend events - the first with Joe McQuany and the second with Joe McCoy. The 2005 version found below, featured all three men presenting. This event still continues around the world by different speakers. [You can find information on the current event by clicking here.](#) AA Historians make note of a change in the way the working of the Steps has evolved over time, many credit this marked change to the impact these seminars have had around the world.

Step 2 of Alcoholics Anonymous: Seek a Higher Power

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) seeks to help those struggling with alcohol addiction achieve and maintain sobriety. Specifically, Step 2 of Alcoholics Anonymous focuses on

introducing the concept of a higher power and using this concept as inspiration for sobriety.

What Is Step 2 of AA?

Alcoholics Anonymous Step 2 states that, "We came to be aware that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." This step follows the first step, in which an individual admits they have an alcohol problem and are powerless to stop drinking on their own.

What Does Step 2 of AA Mean?

To really understand what Step 2 of AA means, it is important to look at it in comparison to the first step. The first step asks people to admit they are powerless over their desire to drink. This is a difficult thing to do because many who struggle with addiction think that if they could just try a little harder, they could stop drinking or that they just haven't found the right answer yet. Admitting you need help means making yourself subordinate to those who are helping you, at least temporarily, so that they can guide you in the right direction. This is what Step 2 of AA encourages you to do, except it puts the problem onto a spiritual plane. Instead of asking you to **allow other people to help you**, it asks you to consider the possibility that there's some sort of power greater than yourself that can guide you towards a better life. AA Step 2 then asks you to define for yourself what that power might be so that you can be open to its guidance. Some people find it helpful to talk to a spiritual adviser, an AA sponsor, or a counselor to help them accept and define their higher power.

How to Approach Step 2 of AA

1. Think about what inspires you to stay sober

For Step 2 of AA, some people use their best selves as a higher power—the way they are when they are sober and doing exactly what they want to be doing. Other people are inspired by a favorite television show or character, a famous person in history, or the love they want their children to feel. Some use God or other religious beliefs. Don't worry about whether your higher power makes sense to anyone else; just choose something or someone that works for you.

2. Talk with other members about their experiences with Step 2

If you're not religious, you may not know how to apply Step 2 of AA. Talking to other AA members can help you get some perspective. Many people come to AA with the same thoughts and feelings that you may have when thinking about this step. Other members can support you on your own quest to understand and use Step 2 of AA and can share their experiences so that you can see some alternative ways of interpreting this step.

3. Be open to new ideas about this step

Sometimes it's difficult to accept AA Step 2 because of your feelings about God or religion. In addition, taking this step further solidifies the idea that you're not able to control your drinking on your own, which can sometimes be scary. Instead of trying too hard to understand this step, try reading it over once a day and just accept whatever thoughts and feelings come into your head. You may find yourself understanding it more as you reread.

4. Consider seeing a spiritual advisor

If you are feeling conflicted about your Higher Power, consider reaching out to a spiritual advisor. Their guidance may be helpful in providing some clarity for you, as well as giving you a better understanding of the many different kinds of potential spiritual connections.

5. Make Step 2 a part of your daily life

You can incorporate Step 2 into your daily life in a number of ways, even if you don't have a full grasp on it just yet. For example, journaling every morning can be a helpful way to clear your mind of the many thoughts you may be having, allowing you to focus more on connecting with a Higher Power of your choosing.

ALCOHOL.ORG

The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

Step

1 **2** 3 ((

4 5 6

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves
could restore us to sanity

7 8 9

10 11 12))

Alcoholics Anonymous AA.Org

Common Challenges With Step 2 of AA

Arguably the most common reason why Step 2 can be challenging for some people because they may think that they have to believe in God to continue on with the program. Those who don't have religious beliefs or who aren't comfortable with the concept of God sometimes **balk at this step**. However, Step 2 isn't really about God—it's about finding something outside of yourself to inspire you and help you remain sober. Many AA members, religious or not, have found this step useful in finding inspiration and building a drive to achieve or maintain sobriety. Additional challenges that people might also face with Step 2 of AA include:

Fear of losing control as they work to put their faith in something intangible.
Being skeptical of how the Steps can actually benefit them.
Continuing to struggle with admitting and accepting their addiction fully.

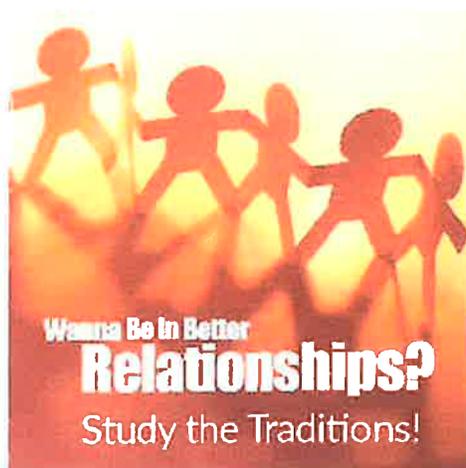
Tradition 2

Short Form:

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.”

Long Form:

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.”



**Overriding Idea of T2:
God Speaks Through His Kids**

**Principle:
IDENTIFICATION**

**Reading Assignment:
12&12: Pgs. 132-138**

From the Foreword of the 12 & 12: "A.A.'s Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the Fellowship itself. They outline the means by which A.A. maintains its unity and relates itself to the world about it, the way it lives and grows."

TRADITION SUMMARY

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS KIDS

In a relationship based upon the Traditions there is no such thing as individual authority. All decisions are arrived at by a majority agreement, reached after all elements of the problem or situation have been considered and a Higher Power has been contacted for guidance in the making of the decisions (an informed group conscience). Unfortunately, however, many times our relationships are unhealthy due to the dominance of one person or the other. The uninformed often feels he/she has the ability to "know best" for its individual participants and tries to impose this attitude of "playing God" in the relationship.

All my life I feared authority. I had a very strange idea about it. I didn't like anybody else's authority. I only liked my own authority. Maybe it is not so strange if you're a sick alcoholic like me. But I certainly did not have any respectful attitude towards authority.

My first successful experience in not being fearful of authority was in A.A.. I did not fear my sponsor but relied on him. I saw my sponsor as the expression of a loving God. My second experience in not being fearful was when I started listening to the group conscience. The more I followed what I heard in A.A. through the group conscience, the better my life became. Gradually I have extended this trust in the group in A.A. to that of the world. Tradition 2 encourages me to listen in order to have good relationships with you and to trust you as part of the group conscience. God may, just may, be speaking through you.

Life forces me to become an elder statesman or a bleeding deacon. The group conscience will correct me if I am out of line and I have a choice to complain like a bleeding deacon or lead by a humble example like an elder statesman.

THANK GOD A.A. is SELF-CLEANING (with God's help of course).

Step-Tradition Parallel

Each tradition answers the question raised by the parallel step. The second step raises the question of how I can come to believe and what is sanity. I came to believe by trusting the group conscience in A.A., and then I began to trust God and eventually the world. The experience of

trusting A.A. to keep me sober is the experience that gave me confidence in God and in you.
This is how the second tradition helped me to come to believe.

(Excerpts from the text above come from the Traditions Study developed by the Unity Insures
Recovery Through Service A.A. Group, Los Angeles, CA.)

Elder Statesman vs. Bleeding Deacon

1. Looks for God in the Room
2. Talks Slow & Listens Fast
3. Embodies Humility
4. Leads by Example

1. Looks for Validation in the Room
2. Talks Fast & Listens Slow
3. Embodies Ego
4. Leads Through Intimidation



Tradition Illustrated

The Second Tradition

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

*Now that I've been elected Secretary, I'll show this group some real leadership!



*There's only one way to do it and I'll tell you what it is...



...furthermore, we'll take our money and establish a fund... I'll manage it...



DOWN, BOY.



*Thank you. Now shall we talk about working the program?



Members of A.A. may be chosen to serve in many ways...



Group Secretary



Intergroup Representative



General Service Representative



Conference Delegate

But they must always remember that they serve for the good of all, without authority over any.



A.A. is both a democracy and, in Bill W.'s words, "a trustee society." A trustee is one who has no power to order anybody to do anything. In most groups, most of the State rotates out of office at the end of six months and no trustee is elected.

If a group wants to be a part of the whole A.A. service structure, it elects a G.S.R. (general service representative) with a two- or three-year term. G.S.R.s elect a committee of members and then join the main service delegate from the far area to the annual General Service Conference. The Conference is about the closest approximation of government that A.A. has; it produces opinions on important matters of policy; it appoints the choice of some trustee trustees for the General Service Board and directly elects others. But not

the Conference nor the board can give orders to any group or member.

If it's who's in charge around here? A.A. is a spiritual movement and so the "ultimate authority" is the spiritual concept of the "group conscience." It's way is heard when a well-informed group gathers to arrive at a decision. The result rests on more than a simple "yes" and "no" count. Amongst ideas get thoughtful situation. What about that annoying character who's always sure she's right? If she's wrong, she'll still—if she remembers the First Tradition as well as the Second—go along with the decision of the group conscience. Does this nation seem too clearly? Let's think back to our first meetings. The presence we remember is that in these rooms was the same as the group conscience. And it was real—we looked us in, setting up no barriers of rules.



TRADITION'S INVENTORY

As it states at the top of this page, the 12 Traditions were created to help each A.A. group maintain unity and relate better to the world about us. With that in mind, they have been widely used in helping us learn how to be in better relationships with everyone in our life. Below is a snapshot inventory you can take to see how well you are honoring the spiritual principle found in this Tradition (in and out of the rooms of A.A.).

(The foundation of this inventory is from the A.A. Tradition's Checklist first published in the A.A. Grapevine)

-
1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Long-timers?
 2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibility?
 3. Do I look for credit in my AA jobs? Praise for my AA ideas?
 4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
 5. Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
 6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?
 7. Why is it necessary that a healthy relationship be one in which the members are equals?
 8. How do you feel and react when someone tries to or dominates in your relationships?
 9. Do you have an inherent tendency to dominate people around you? How can you correct his defect of character?
 10. Are you someone who is always willing to allow someone else to take control and then complains because you don't like what was done, yet were unable to make a decision yourself?
 11. What is the difference between suggestions, advice, and guidance?
 12. Is God or a Higher Power the only authority in your relationships? How does this Higher Power express Himself to you when making any decisions?
 13. Why is it necessary to give the minority opinion an open-minded evaluation in a group conscience?
 14. Why is humility a necessary ingredient in applying Tradition II to your relationships?
-

Second Step Prayer

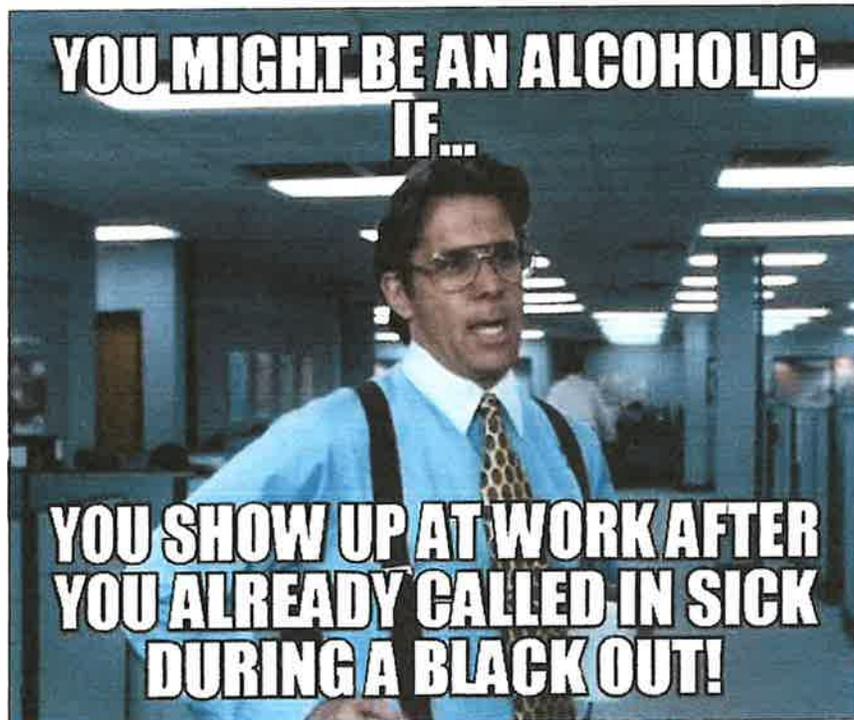
Heavenly Father,

I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity.

I humbly ask that you remove all twisted thought &

Addictive behavior from me this day.

Heal my spirit & restore in me a clear mind.



TECHNOLOGY SHARING SESSION

Tuesday JANUARY 27, 2026

7pm-ET 6pm-CT 5pm-MT 4pm-PT

TOPIC: USING TECHNOLOGY TO CARRY THE MESSAGE IN OUR HOME GROUPS



Slack



PodBean



WordPress



Zoom

Presenters: Love and Service, Hybrid Home Group

We meet quarterly on last Tuesdays.

Meeting ID: 914 769 9066

Passcode: TSS1935



BEGINNING 2026 (JAN 27 APR 28 JULY 28 OCT 27)

A.A. AREAS, DISTRICTS, GROUPS, & INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS share how our Fellowship is using technology to carry the message.



Join our AA Tech discussion on SLACK
techsharingsessions.slack.com



Intergroup Meeting

- **March 7th, 2026 @ 4:00PM**
- **Special Zoom Presentation**

LOG IN: 3498607354

PASSWORD: 12345

- **Isaac H. Executive Director of North Wind Wellness Centre**
- **Construction updates**
- **Overview of what the new location will offer**

Drawing of proposed facilities in Pouce Coupe, BC



Fort St. John AA Helpline
(250) 794-0032

Sun. 8:00 pm (C) Tri Unity Group, 12x12, steps and traditions study,
The Salvation Army 10116 –100 Avenue

Mon. 8: pm (C) Monday Night 12x12 Study Group
Presbyterian Church Basement 9907 98 - St

Mon. 7:00 pm (C) Newcomers Meeting
Last Monday of the Month (O) Cake Meeting
FSJ Health Unit (Y) side (North) entrance
10115 110 Avenue

Tue. 8:00 pm (C) Charlie Lake Group
Last Tuesday of the Month (O) Cake Meeting
Charlie Lake Community Church
Front door, downstairs

Tue. 7:00 pm (C/O)
Tuesday Night Ladies Group
Last Tuesday of the month 6:30 – 7:30
The Spiritual Room (FSJ Hospital) (Y)
8407 – 112 Ave (Peace Villa entrance)

Wed. 8:00 pm (C) Tri Unity Group
The Salvation Army
10116 – 100 Avenue

Thu. 8:00 pm (C) Friendship Group
Old Sally Ann, Front door 10116 – 100 Avenue

Fri. 8:00 pm (C/O) Friday Night Recovery Group
FSJ Health Unit (Y) side (North) entrance
10115 110 Avenue

Sat. 8:00 pm (C) Primary Purposes
FSJ Health Unit (Y) side (North) entrance
10115 110 Avenue

Dawson Creek Helpline
(250-794-0032)

Mon. 6:00 am (C) Sunrise Meeting @ Browns

Serenity in Peace
Mon. 7:00 pm (O) 12x12 meeting
Tue. 8:00 pm (O) Topic Meeting
Thu. 8:00 pm (O) Big Book Discussion
Fri. 7:00 pm (O) Candlelight Topic Meeting
Sat. 8:00 pm (O) Open Topic
Health Unit (Y)
1001 – 110th Avenue

Fri. 6:00 am (C) Sunrise Meeting @ Browns

Sun. 8:00 pm (C)
Step by Step-Step Group
Front Entrance Student Lounge @ Northern Lights
College (Y)
11401 – 8th Street

Meeting Type Code:
(O) Open to concerned persons
(C) For those that have a drinking problem
(C/O) usually closed, but open for Birthdays
(Y) Wheelchair Accessible

For updates, please e-mail
FSJintergroup@gmail.com
Updated January 27, 2026

Chetwynd Neil (250) 788-9658,
Mike (250) 401-7679

Tue. 8:00 pm (C) Chetwynd Group Kici-
Awasimsak Family Center (Y)
5101 South Access Road

Fri. 8:00 pm (O) Chetwynd Group Kici-
Awasimsak Family Center (Y)
5101 South Access Road

Fort Nelson Mile 300 group
(250) 500-1617

Mon. 8:00 pm (O) (Y)
Big Book Study, United Church
5108 Sunset Dr.
Wed. 8:00 pm (C)
Sat. 8:00 pm (O)
Fort Nelson Hospice Center
5012 52 Avenue West
Or Zoom 477 163 8887 no password

Tumbler Ridge

Wed. 12:00 pm (C)
Baptist Church
115 Commercial Crescent
Fri. 7:00 pm (O) Willow Hall
419 Willow Drive
(250) 242-5412
(250) 242-4942 -John
(250) 257-7264 Pamela

Hudson's Hope (250) 713-1613

(250) 713-1613 -call for information

Literature

Most titles available at any meeting,
contact **Clay R at (250) 793-9818** or
roberts.will@yahoo.ca