



HAPPILY, AND USEFULLY WHOLE

SUNLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT

JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2021



By : Jyl Forsyth



By : Jyl Forsyth

CONTENTS

Page 1 – Contents

Page 2 – Experience, Strength, and Hope on Sunlight of the Spirit for members for less than one year

Page 3 – Experience, Strength, and Hope on Sunlight of the Spirit for members with 1 year +

Page 4 – Reflection Back to Basics

Page 5 – Workshops

Page 6 – H.U.W. Newsletter meetings/Pass it on Campaign

Page 7 – Expect Miracles by Dana M.

Page 8 – Expect Miracles cont./Tri-county conference.

Page 9 – Contributions vs Donations and where money and spirituality mix

Page 10 - Design for Living Group Info.

Page 11 – Answer Key from last months edition

Page 12 - Answer Key from last month's edition

SUNLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT



EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH, AND HOPE ON SUNLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT FOR MEMBERS FOR LESS THAN ONE YEAR

My name is Jeannine, and I am a GRATEFUL member of alcoholics anonymous. My last drink was January 2, 2021, to combat my 3-day long binge. I was a classic alcoholic, even though I did not know what that looked like until I started in AA. In my middle to late 40's I had gastric bypass and drinking a small amount of liquor could help me to leave my problems behind, but they came back just as quickly. The hardships of life hit me hard; unhealed emotions from my childhood and all the heartaches that rocked my world could be masked for a short time by poisoning my body and mind with alcohol. I became bitter, angry and I hated myself. Who was I? How did this happen? I don't remember waking up and saying, "Hey, I think I will become a drunk today."

Under the influence, I would call my kids, asked them if they loved me, and ask them if they would even care if I was gone. Facebook, phone calls and texting caused so many resentments because I felt alone, hurt, and unloved. Why do they not love me enough? Why do I not like to be alone? When I am in a crowd or with my family, I still feel alone. Alcohol ran my life and mind.

After my car accident and a night in jail, I had attended a few hometown AA groups, but most of the members there were court ordered and bitter. I wanted solutions. Desperate for peace within myself, I looked for other programs. I joined Al-anon, where I started to learn to love me. I heard of my inner child for the first time. I knew she was there but thought I had made her up.

I very much wanted an Al-anon sponsor, and the one God chose for me was the one that said, "I would love to sponsor you, but you must complete the 12 steps of AA." Wow! Tell an alcoholic something they don't want to hear. Well, we know how that went! She told me I had the best opportunities with virtual right now and I could leave any meeting I didn't like. Ok, so I decided to try it. Wow! This was great! Instead of just complaining about how unfair life was, there were truly meetings that had solutions. Within my first week of sobriety, God led me to a great meeting with the 11th step as the focus. He led me to Joe and Charlie on YouTube to help me understand the big book and the 12 steps. He also led me to Joyce Meyers. I found a sponsor who is supportive and understanding. She guides me with love but is not afraid to tell me how the alcoholic's mind functions.

God is my higher power. If my mind is quiet, he speaks to me, sometimes as quiet as a butterfly's wing, and sometimes as loud as rockets in the sky. He helped me to make my inner child feel safe. My love of self is growing. To feel whole, I no longer require others to communicate their love. God is always with me and his spirit lives within me. I am at peace when I am alone with him.

My home meeting is a priority and I love to attend and be of service. If I am able to help just one person, it helps me to stay sober. I do things for others without being acknowledged. These actions come from my heart without expectations. I love my life! It is better now than before alcohol, and that is why I say I am a grateful member of alcoholics anonymous.

Life with God is like a garden. God will supply the tools, seeds, soil, water, and sun. My job is to use the tools to ready the soil, plant the seeds and water the plants. I have to tend to them every day, so the weeds do not overgrow and kill the tender young plants. If I do the work the plants will bloom and bear fruit so I may share with others. This is not only so with God's works, but also AA. Do the work to grow and then pass it on. – **J.P.**



EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH, AND HOPE ON SUNLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT FOR MEMBERS WITH 1 YEAR +

I always love when a meeting format is speaking on what things were like, what happened and what things are like now, and I'm asked to speak... That's because I usually don't have to study for it as it is my story.

Things came to head at home after too many instances where I was not hiding my drinking as well as I thought I was. I was given an ultimatum from my wife and daughter..."we are going to Chicago for Christmas to visit family...and you're not." This caught my attention.

It was at that moment that I now believe I was given the **Gift of Desperation**. I sought substance abuse help the following day. An appointment was still a week off...and I did not drink. Impossible!! But that's what happened. I knew I did not want to endure the pain of losing...no... giving everything away. The experienced counselor recommended I attend AA. What an eye opener. I felt hopeless, remorseful, and beaten. Perfect!

Surrender and acceptance were my 2 new favorite words. A sponsor found me in the first week and my journey into the 12 Steps of AA began. It's amazing what can happen when a person has hit a bottom. All kinds of new perspectives were uncovered and pondered. I was challenged to put old habits and behaviors aside in favor of new and unfamiliar ways of thinking and acting.

The biggest change was to consider a power greater than myself. I was initially uncomfortable with this concept as I had neatly discarded anything religious and spiritual (?) long ago. But the events that unfolded were so miraculous to me, this alcoholic had no other choice but to believe that something beside me was at work here. I was after all a heavy daily drinker. Bottles hidden everywhere. I could not stop drinking. There was no will power of my own to avoid stopping at the numerous liquor stores on my way home from work. When all was considered, stopping drinking was a miracle to me. And I could not take credit for doing it.

As time went on, I came to believe that I could rely on that same higher power that I had been building a relationship with to guide me with everything in my life. If he could take away the obsession to drink, he could do anything. I didn't stop drinking...the obsession was lifted. Big difference to me.

The work as it initially appeared was going through the steps. Now I find the work is more so in making the changes in my life that I uncovered that would help me be the person that I always wanted to be. To think of others first. To be honest, caring, and helpful to all without expectations. I do this with the help of all of you also as my higher power is working through you!

One of the ways my higher power has guided me was to have sponsees placed in my path. This to me has been the one of the greatest gifts I have received on this journey. To be able to share with others all our experiences, good and bad, to help each other has been invaluable. Never saw that all my mistakes in life were a way for someone to relate to me and them! To watch someone experience what we have found is priceless.

This fellowship has given me a life worth living. This for me is only accomplished by doing (in varying degrees) what I have done since I got here. Getting together with fellow alcoholics in meetings, phone calls and online. Sharing experiences. While the pandemic has been trying, I find I have been able to attend more meetings (online) than ever!

Practicing and relying through prayer and meditation as a connection with my higher power. Receiving what has been freely given to all that want it. Physical, emotional, and spiritual sobriety. These are the most important things in my life today. All I had to do was ask. – **Bill R.**



Reflection of Back2Basics

Entering the AA doors were feelings of anxiety, fear, and insecurity. Both in myself and in the program.

I read The Big Book given by my sponsor, attended meetings, shared what positive thing I could but something was missing. I just didn't feel connected to the program.

Every time I came into a room, all I ever heard were members problems, their shame, the bitterness they held against another and the inconsistencies to "working the steps".

I felt lost and miserable.

Then I came across a woman's fellowship meeting and I heard about the Back2Basics workshop. To hear there was a solution to my thinking and it can be resolved in 4 weeks I was sold!

I enjoyed every moment of sharing my experience, strength, and hope. I finally understood what the Big Book authors meant and had sisters to share in the meaning on the steps, traditions and promises in sobriety.

I was struggling around Days 40-60. I thought I knew everything there was to know. My sponsorship program wasn't benefiting me. And I hadn't been of service. So, while praying and journaling I got honest with myself that I realized I was going to walk my recovery path with my sharing partner and sisters in the B2B program.

Since then, I have witnessed time and again several occasions where my Higher Power was working in me and in those around me. When learning how to pray and meditate to my God of my understanding at 4 am silent meditations. When sharing my 4th step and witnessing my ex, drive-by my house while in prayer — knowing he is sick and deserves compassion and mercy and my highlight of being honest, resolute, and open minded to share my past transgressions and seek the forgiveness from my parents after years of abuse, mistreatment, and abandonment, I knew that this program WORKS IF YOU WORK IT!

I surrendered to not walk down regret road and take the path where the grass is greener. The AA freedom path!!

Today, I reflect on 100 days sober. Back2Basics did for me what 30 years of self-will, physiatrist intervention and medicine could not. AA has changed my life. Back2Basics has changed my thinking and perspective. And my God has taught me that experience + knowledge + reflection equals to wisdom. And with that wisdom comes understanding. ***With gratitude, Joy U.***





HOW TO LISTEN TO GOD WEEKLY WORKSHOP

Starting Sunday **September 12th 9:00am-10:30am EST**
on Zoom for a 7-week workshop of 2-way prayer and meditation.

To register, please email HowToListenToGod@gmail.com



BACK TO BASICS

(Based on the previous flyer)

Ladies on Zoom –

each new session begins at the **first Saturday at 9:00 am EST**

Co-ed - the First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm EST.

Please email Back2BasicsMiGroup@gmail.com to register.

Back to Basics A.A. Beginners Meetings
4 week course starting Saturday August 7, 2021.
9 AM EST for 1 hour
BACK TO BASICS -


Come be part of how people stayed sober with the A.A. Beginner's Meetings. Great for newcomers. Bring your sponsor or a sharing partner can be assigned to you at the first meeting. Great for old timers. Bring a newcomer and show her how to recover. We will be reading from the Back-To-Basics Book to show you precisely how we have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body

Register by July 23, 2021 @
back2basicsmigroup@gmail.com.
Call Jyl for more info. 248-895-5777

Back To Basics

The Alcoholics Anonymous
Beginners' Meetings

"Here are the steps we took . . ."
in Four One-Hour
Sessions



Wally P.



Come join us to the Happily & Usefully Whole
- District 20 Newsletter Committee!

Meets on the **First Sunday of every month** at 1:00
pm EST on Zoom starting on Sunday, February 7,
2021.

Topic: DCM 20 Newsletter Committee Meeting
Time: Feb 7, 2021 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and
Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/85374415046?pwd=TohHbjFpRTV2Y3MvSk9aRjJDbG5UZzo9>

Meeting ID: 853 7441 5046
Passcode: 537129

Contact Dana M at 313-348-1338-m or
Email: 33.20.newsletter@gmail.com

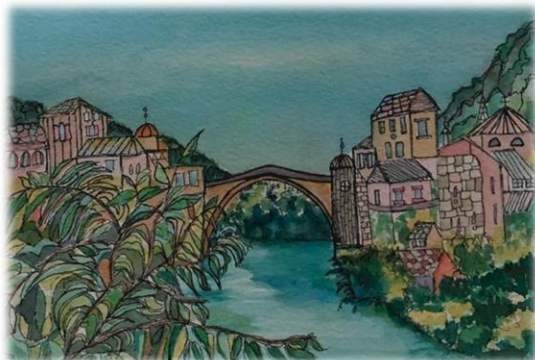


AAGRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

PASS IT ON CAMPAIGN

<https://www.aagrapevine.org/>



Above 5 artwork pieces By: Jyl Forsyth



EXPECT MIRACLES BY DANA M.

Gratitude. Promises. Love. Tolerance. Service. It is amazing what happens when I live the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and connect with the Sunlight of the Spirit. He is in me now and surrounds me. It is that inner voice that when I listen, I can hear Him. And then passing His message of hope by action is how it works for me.

I have so much gratitude to be recovered by living the 12 steps. When I was around one year sober, I was going to tons of meetings, but wasn't ready nor willing to let God remove all my defects of character. I was crashing and burning – in a lot of pain. I remember opening a meeting at Acceptance and one of the ladies must have heard my pain (caused by self) and gave me a coin which said, "Expect Miracles". I was afraid to accept it, and she insisted because even though I could not see all of the pain, it was obvious. I kept that coin until I witnessed another lady in pain and then gave it to her. I am grateful for a community of men and women who Expect Miracles.

The 9th Step Promises we read at meetings kept me coming back. I blew up my life before I came into the rooms – everything was on fire and then by surrendering to a new way of living, life got better, (until I took the wheel back and thought I could steer my life) Oh, I steered my life alright – right into a ditch while in sobriety. Yikes, but those moments of self-will and emotional bottoms as well as the unmanageability / pain drove me right back to the Sunlight of the Spirit. After coming back and not drinking in between, doing service work, I was getting promises, but not the external - the internal ones such as peace of mind and freedom of self. I love that there is a promise in all of the steps – which I've learned that I can't get promises in any step if the world revolves around Dana.

By living the 12 Steps and continuously having a Spiritual Awakening, it brings me back to love. I remember going to a meeting and hearing a lady who said to "love them through it or speak lovingly", I did not understand that until I did. I am learning to invite love into my day – my Higher Power, who I choose to call God is love. By loving others and things, I connect with God, and it is a beautiful and peaceful experience which has a beautiful ripple effect.

One of the miracles is to seek tolerance of others by understanding them – instead of trying to be understood. It is the unselfishness that I seek – to avoid the instincts in collision. My inner voice lets me know when I am in collision with someone else or something – it is an awkward feeling that I ask God to remove. I cannot remove my defects of character, I need help.

And Service, one of the ladies at a meeting, helped me understand that Service is Love in Action. Before I had a Spiritual Awakening, I would try to look good by "serving others", but my motivation was always about me. What's in it for me? What can I gain from this? These were thoughts that surrounded me constantly. Today, Service is Love in Action – without any expectation. I just leave the outcome to God – most of the time. Service connects me to God and continues our relationship.

***Expect Miracles continued...***

I am so grateful to recover from this seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. It has not always been easy, but the service of others has helped me so that God does for me what I could not do for myself.

Today, I am do not have the career I had when I started, I moved several times, and my health had severe challenges to the point of maybe not surviving, but as one of the ladies gave me the coin, "Expect Miracles". I didn't know then what I know now and that is that I am here to play the role He assigns – just as the Big Book says. I ask in my Morning Meditation, what is His will for me and to give me the Power to carry it out – and then obey. One of the ladies shared about a "Book of Evidence" which is to write down the miracles that happen so that when the days are rough, I can reflect back at all of the daily miracles that happen. I need the reminders because I have a short shelf life. I am grateful for that suggestion.

I am grateful for this journey – something I never thought I would embark – and that's a good thing. There has been so much that's changed and for that I am forever grateful. It is the journey of building a relationship with the God of my understanding by inviting Him in – and then serving others.

Today, I am not deliberately or by mistake blowing up my life in sobriety – it is not self-sustaining. I am not as afraid of the past or the unknown because I find the Sunlight in the Spirit in the Now and it is a result of the 12 steps and doing them quickly and often – helping other ladies and bringing love and tolerance to my day.

Thank you for the light and love I am living, which is what keeps me physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually sober.

James H., one of the first Members of Alcoholics Anonymous, would say that it does not matter how much time we have in the program – one hour, one day, one month, or one year, for example, it is who we are helping today.

Expect Miracles.

TRI-COUNTY CONFERENCE

"THE STEPS WE TOOK"

FALL 2021 JOIN US
SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2021

NEW LOCATION – PONTIAC MARRIOTT
3600 CENTERPOINTE PKWY

Online registration and more information to come:

<https://www.tricountyconference.org/>



7th Tradition

CONTRIBUTIONS VS DONATIONS AND WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX

Finances and managing money have been my occupation for the last 30 years. My job fundamentally is to cure or establish the financial structure of my employer's business enabling them to generate great wealth within their organization and within their personal lives. Managing the bottom line means everything in my occupation, the more profit the more money for me, my fellow employees and the principals. The materiality of what I do is obvious as it is all about the money. How much money can I make for the organization I work and whom else within the organization is generating money? Long gone are the employees that were losing money as we have no use for them. Welcome to the world of financial greed, the more money the better for everyone, making and having money means everything or so I thought.

My name is Lori, I am an alcoholic and contributing member of Alcoholic Anonymous. I have been associated with A.A. for approximately 30 years. After a year long slip, I am back in the program. This time, seeing myself and the program through eyes which shoulder much more optimism while finding peace and serenity through meditation and spirituality. Contributions within Alcoholics Anonymous are normally not monetary but more so your time, your story, your interactions, and your extension of open arms to the Alcoholic that still suffers. Sure, donations help any organization, but it does not help the Alcoholic that still suffers. It may give him or her a place to go to converse with other alcoholics and drink a cup of coffee, true healing comes from all of us being together as one. We cannot buy spirituality neither can we buy our sobriety.

We cannot throw money at our alcohol problems expecting our defects to be removed. Contributions to Alcoholics Anonymous must come from the heart first, fulfilling the 7th Tradition truly means, "what we are privileged to give — not take — in material terms." I do not believe I fully understood this my first time around. I was running companies making money for everyone believing money was the solutions to all problems but knowing what I know now, that is not the case. Money did not stop my alcoholism. I was not involved with Alcohol Anonymous the first time looking to fulfill my spiritual needs. No matter your belief of a higher power, I truly believe by helping the alcoholic that still suffers you are transitioning to a higher level of spirituality. By helping someone else, you in turn are helping yourself.

Reconciliation between my contributions to AA and my day job lead only to the conclusion that money will never be enough to reach the spiritual axiom I seek. It reinforces in my mind the 7th Tradition that any solicitation of public donations would hinder our ability to help others. As alcoholics we need to be a self-sustaining in the sense that outside contributions would lead to a loss of our principal objectives. It would make A.A. no different than the company I work for or other non-profit groups. Those who bring in the most donations will be rewarded and coveted, while others would not. That is in direct contrast to our objectives within the twelve steps and our recovery. Requesting donations from our alcoholic members must take a backseat to carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — wherever he or she may be. It is the only way Alcoholic Anonymous works for all alcoholics.





DISTRICT 20 INFORMATION



District 20 Business Meeting

Last Tuesday Of The Month

AT 6:30 PM

Currently Meeting on [Zoom \(Click for Link\)](#)

District 20 Information

DCM: Shannon H.

Email: dcm20@aa-semi.org

Send Contributions To:

District 20

PO Box 70963

Rochester Hills, MI 48307-0963

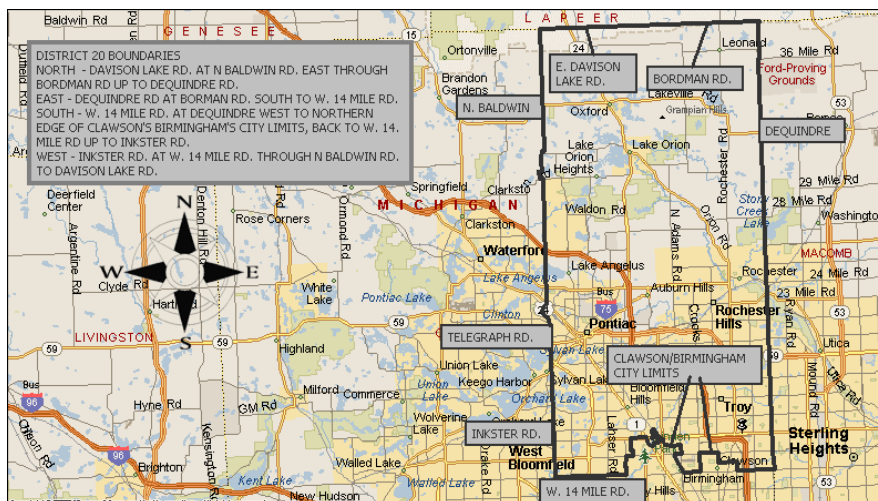
www.designforlivingroyalokak.webnode.com

"TAKE THE STEPS...TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE!"

A STEP TAKING GROUP!

DESIGN FOR LIVING

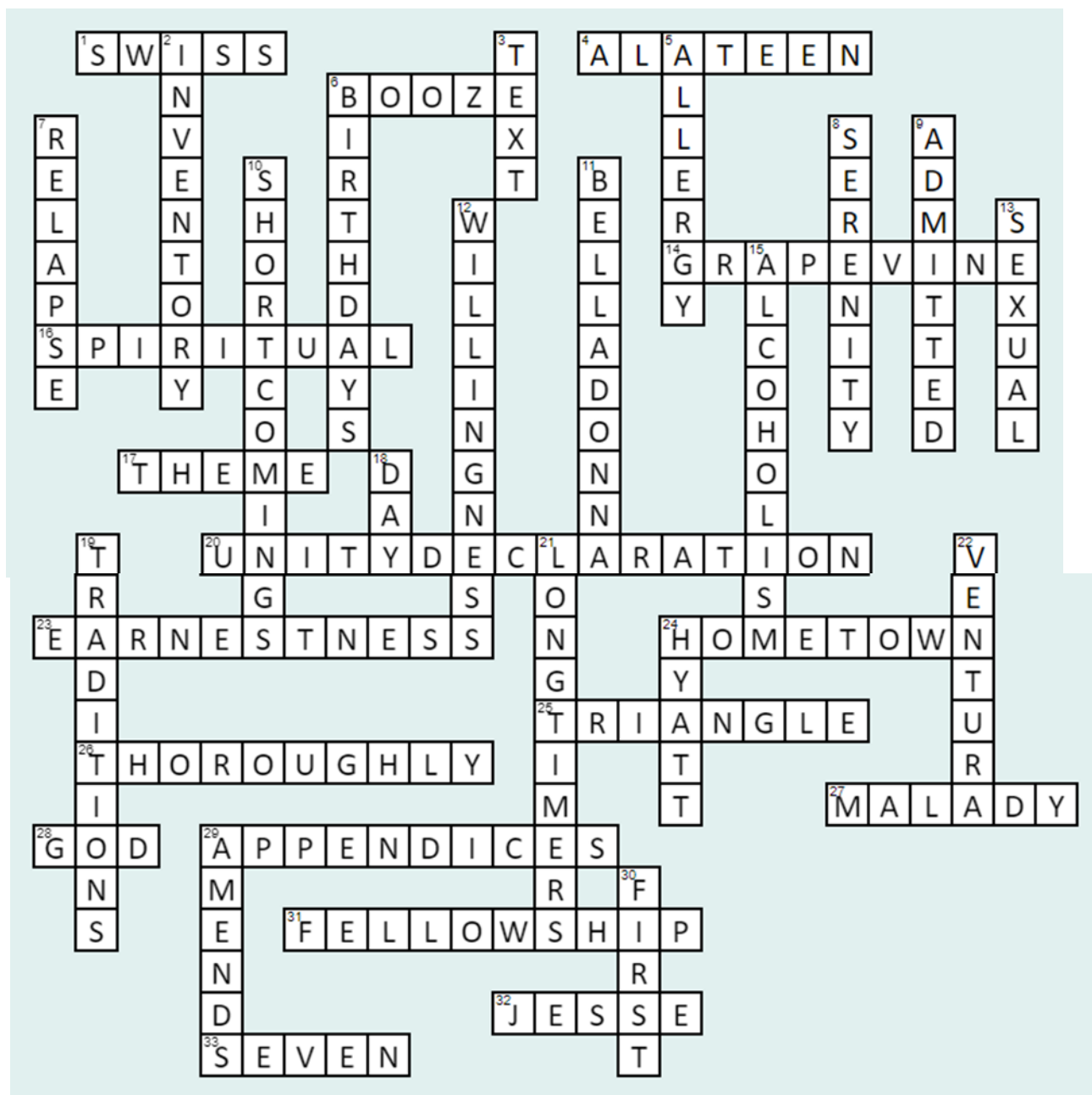
A 14 Week Online Step Taking Group
August 19, 2021 - November 18, 2021
 14 THURSDAYS from 6:30pm - 8:00pm EST on ZOOM
 REGISTRATION is open JUNE 28th, 2021-JULY 26, 2021
 Registration is mandatory online by July 26th, 2021
 to participate in this Design for Living course
[JOIN THE MAILING LIST FOR UPDATES AND NOTIFICATIONS](#)
www.designforlivingroyalokak.webnode.com





ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS CROSSWORD

CHALLENGE ANSWERS



**Across**

- 1 Carl Jung was a noted _____ psychoanalyst
- 4 This is the name of the worldwide fellowship that offers a program of recovery for the younger generation of the families of alcoholics
- 6 "_____ works it's magic in an area called the mesolimbic pathway"
- 14 Our AA newsletter is called the _____
- 16 a person who claims neither faith nor disbelief in God.
- 17 The 2013 _____ for our annual convention was "Trudge the road of Happy Destiny"
- 20 "This we owe to A.A.'s future: to place our common welfare first; to keep our Fellowship united. For an A.A. unity depend our lives and the lives of those to come", is called the. (2 words)
- 23 "With all the _____ at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start"
- 24 the title of the first opening meeting at the VCAAC Convention on Friday, is called the _____ Speaker
- 25 The three legs of the _____ represent the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service
- 26 Rarely have we seen a person fail who has _____ followed our path
- 27 In step 12 we ask you when you speak to another alcoholic continue about our disease, refer to it as an illness, a fatal _____
- 28 For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving _____, --- (Tradition 2)
- 29 The Second Edition of the Bog Book added the _____, ---
- 31 A.A.'s Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the _____ itself
- 32 The first name of the 2007 VCAAC Alcoholic Anonymous Chairperson
- 33 In what step do we " Humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings"

Down

- 2 In Step 4 we make a searching and fearless moral _____ of ourselves
- 3 "The Big Book is our basic _____ for our Society".....
- 5 it is believed that Alcoholics of our type have a _____ to Alcohol
- 6 We celebrate _____ at certain meetings for staying sober consistently for 365 consecutive days
- 7 When a sober member of AA has a "slip" or goes "off the wagon"
- 8 "God grant me the _____"
- 9 In Step 5 we _____ to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs
- 10 In Step Seven we "Humbly ask Him to remove our _____"
- 11 William Silkworth, subjected Bill W to a detox regimen known as the _____ Cure
- 12 "_____, honesty, and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery"
- 13 "13th step"—AA slang for _____ exploitation
- 15 The Big Book of AA has helped millions of men and women recover from _____
- 18 We are learning to live without alcohol _____ at a time.
- 19 "AA's Twelve _____ apply to the life of the Fellowship itself"....
- 21 the next to last meeting we have at the VCAAC Convention is known as the _____ Meeting
- 22 VCAAC stands for _____ County Alcoholics Anonymous Convention
- 24 the name of the Hotel were we are currently hosting our VCAAC Convention
- 29 AA addresses this risk with the eighth and ninth steps, which require alcoholics to make _____ to people they've wronged
- 30 The Preamble _____ appeared in the Grapevine in June 1947