

# Monthly Reprieve

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## RACINE AREA CENTRAL OFFICE'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Store is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am—5:00 pm. Saturdays 9:00 am—2:00 pm; Closed Sundays

## The 7th Step - What /s Humility?

The seventh step of Alcoholics Anonymous urges us to embrace pursuit of humility as a fundamental aspect of staying sober. Humility is equally vital on the path towards a useful, happy life. Yet AA and NA meeting participants often struggle when trying to define humility. The modern world tends to associate humility with weakness, or at the least, an almost passive mode of existence. But is humility the way of weakness?

In the opening paragraphs of the chapter devoted to step seven in The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Bill Wilson emphatically states, "the attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of AA's twelve steps." The legendary alcoholic goes on to claim that, "...without some degree of humility, no alcoholic can stay sober at all." So even if humility is for sissies and lame ducks, if I don't have it, I'm not going to be sober long. Same goes for any alcoholic or drug addict reading this humble article.

Another problem with today's concept of humility lies in its association with punishment. How many times have we heard how a situation involved a dose of humble pie? Punishment, however, is not synonymous with this misunderstood virtue. We can chalk up this misguided notion to the advent of American exceptionalism.

At the time the big book of Alcoholic Anonymous was published (1935), and later when The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions was published (1952), the quality of humility referred to a "reasonable perspective of oneself." Bill Wilson expanded this definition when he wrote that humility was, "the clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to be what we can be."

I'm not sure about you, but I had no idea who I was with a belly full of booze and drugs. You were likely to see a

variety of personas on me, depending on the quantity and mixture of intoxicants. There was out-of-my-mind me, incoherently rambling about a variety of topics which I knew nothing about. There was also the pitiful drunk sitting at the bar while sobbing over the somber cards life had dealt. Substance abuse brought out more faces on me than one of Shakespeare's 'players'.

In postwar America, sincere recognition of a necessary reliance upon a Higher Power was expected of any social or political leader. This spiritual relationship helped mold the core of American culture. Unfortunately today, spirituality has lost its luster. In walked iPods, cell phones, pop music and social media. Out walked genuine compassion, service and self-sacrifice.

Even in 1952, however, the idea that "character building and spiritual values had to come first" and "material satisfactions were not the purpose of living" was no easy task for the authors of 12 step recovery to sell. Visions of fortunes and modern convenience burned bright in the United States, and pursuit of wealth tended to prevail over personal character development. So while today's problems of power and prestige aren't fresh news, I think it's safe to say the scope of our culture's spiritual sickness continues to grow.

So what does a humble person look like today? How does a person who has genuine humility walk and talk today? How can we recognize the precious sobriety sustaining quality of "humility" that Bill Wilson was trying to convey when he pointed to it "as the foundation of each of AA's 12 steps?"

According to several dictionaries, the definition of a person displaying humility is one who acts "stable, steady, calm, patient, open-minded, nonjudgmental, temperate and realistic." Certainly, no one can reasonably argue with this

long litany of desirable character traits. All of these demonstrations of humility possess great merit. Yet none of these descriptions of a humble person mention the "essential ingredient" or "essence" of all humility, which Bill Wilson carefully points out, is "the desire to seek and do God's will."

In the 12 steps, "...the desire to seek and do God's will" is the essential ingredient. Over time, unless the word humility is enlarged in Alcoholics Anonymous' lexicon, the essential, sobriety sustaining notion that seeking the will of God is the most important ingredient in the 12 step recipe for recovery may be lost. Unless, the essential concept of "humility" is clarified and enlarged in modern AA culture, this vital glue will become lost in translation. In a nutshell, humility is the honest desire to seek and do God's will; nothing more and nothing less.

Words are symbols to express ideas normally larger than the word itself. Consequently, many of our biggest and most important ideas are represented by several words that surround a complex notion. It seems the concept of humility might be best expressed today by a group of words rather than just one word. Word Clouds, popular on the internet today, work well to express an idea that is bigger than just one word.

What would your word cloud for humility look like? Would it contain only the visible attributes of humility like "stable, calm, patient, open minded, nonjudgmental, temperate and realistic" or would your word cloud also contain the all-important, historic essence of the concept of humility: the desire to seek and do God's will?

Ultimately, the seventh step teaches us a useful, happy life is only attainable if we spend our lives seeking and doing God's will. Humility is merely a natural demonstration of a fulfilling, spiritual life.

### Seventh Concept

*"The Conference recognizes that the bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments: that the trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all world service affairs of A.A."*



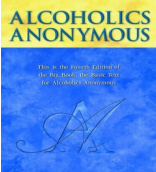
## July Focus

### Step Seven

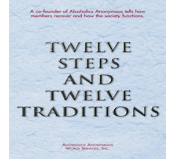
*"Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings"*

### Seventh Tradition

*"Every A. A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions"*



# Our Stories



## A Deeper Look into Step 7 (Excerpts from around recovery)

*Step 7 is similar to sSep 3. It is more specific, however, because now I have completed my personal inventory and so I have a better idea of the roots of my addictive behaviors. I do my best to not play games about these defects of character. In this step I surrender to the "surgery of God" and ask God to remove these defects of character. I do this with a sincere and humble heart, knowing that only in such a way can I find my path to true sanity and peace.*

This may also mean action on my part in getting rid of sources that lead me to addictive behaviors. If it is my pride that makes me believe that I can still live with these sources of temptation, then the sources need to go along with my pride. I rid my life of those things, people or situations that are causing me to fall or stumble as far as I can do so in a responsible manner. - **From 12Step.org**

*The Seventh Step is where we make the change in our attitude which permits us, with humility as our guide, to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God. The whole emphasis of Step Seven is on humility. It is really saying to us that we ought to be willing to try humility in seeking the removal of our shortcomings just as we did when we admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, and came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. If that degree of humility could enable us to find the grace by which such a deadly obsession could be banished, then there must be hope of the same result respecting any other problem we could possibly have.*

- **Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 76**

*Taking Step Seven was for many of us the greatest act of authentic humility we have ever been asked to commit: to transfer control of our recovery to God...*

...according to the Twelve and Twelve, humility is a clear recognition of who we are followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be. That is, humility is seeing ourselves as we actually are, good and bad, strong and weak, and acting authentically on those truths. This is not a naive attitude suggesting we have in some way already "arrived." It is a sincere attempt to state the positive truth that when we face the truth of our shortcomings and the fact that we are powerless to change and begin to let God take our defects away, we have entered the pathway of humility. For the reality is, only God can take away our Sin, our deeply entrenched addictions, and our lifelong character defects. It is on this pathway, where we humbly ask God to remove all these defects of character, that the tools of recovery bring the healing, happiness, and security we have dreamed of. But once more it is only powerlessness and pain that can force us to take the seventh Step into humility.

- **A Hunger for Healing, p. 116-117**

*Humility is as much a part of staying clean as food and water are to staying alive. As our addiction progressed, we devoted our energy toward satisfying our material desires. All other needs were beyond our reach. We always wanted gratification of our basic desires.*

...The word humble applies because we approach this Power greater than ourselves to ask for the freedom to live without the limitations of our past ways. Many

of us are willing to do it without reservations, on pure blind faith, because we are sick of what we have been doing and how we are feeling. Whatever works, we go all the way.

- **Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, Chapter 4/Step 7**

*We need humility for three reasons:*

- 1.) *So that we can recognize the severity of our character defects. One aspect of our addictions is that we tend to deny and minimize the pain they inflict. Therefore as we try to assess our character defects, we may, unless we take a very humble approach, underestimate their severity.*
- 2.) *So that we can acknowledge the limits of human power in addressing these character defects. We cannot do it on our own. We cannot do it by sheer willpower. We cannot do it by our own intellect and reasoning.*
- 3.) *So that we can appreciate the enormity of God's power to transform lives.*

... Although Step 7 is the shortest step in terms of wording and is perhaps the least discussed in recovery groups, it is probably the most potent of the twelve. It embodies the miracle of transformation as we turn over to God our broken, defective personalities in order that He might mold them into healthy, effective instruments of His will.

- **Serenity, A Companion for Twelve Step Recovery, p. 54-55**



# 7th Step Tools and Prayer

## The 7th Step List

<b>SHORTCOMINGS AND DEFECTS</b>	
<b>Characteristics of self-will:</b>	<b>Characteristics of God's Will:</b>
Selfishness & Self-seeking Being Self-centered Dishonesty Fears Being Inconsiderate Pride Greed Lustful Thoughts Anger Envy Sloth/Procrastination Gluttony Impatience Intolerance Resentment Hate Harmful Acts Self-pity Self-justification Self-importance Self-condemnation Suspicion/Jealousy Doubt	Interest in Others/Altruism Being Love-/Others-/God-centered Honesty Faith & Trust in God Being Considerate Humility, Seeking God's Will Giving & Sharing Respectful Thoughts Serenity Being Grateful Taking Right Action Moderation Patience Tolerance Forgiveness Love & Concern for Others Good Deeds Self-forgetfulness Humility & Truth Modesty Self-forgiveness Trust Faith & Trust in God

**ALCOHOLICS**

“My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here to do your bidding. Amen”

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**ANONYMOUS**



# Events and Service Notes

## *When Anyone, Anywhere Reaches Out For Help, I Want The Hand Of A.A. Always To Be There ...*

Are you an AA member with the desire to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic? Your service is needed by the District 17 Special Needs/Accessibility Committee. No prior knowledge is needed, and there are tons of ways in which your service is needed. Be on the lookout for the volunteer signups like the one below circulating at the meetings, or bring this form to *your* meeting/group, or contact the Carly R at [racinespecialneeds@gmail.com](mailto:racinespecialneeds@gmail.com) for other ways to contribute.

### Whom We Serve:

- ✓ Physically disabled
- ✓ Deaf & hearing impaired
- ✓ Blind & visually impaired
- ✓ Learning or reading impaired
- ✓ Seniors and homebound
- ✓ Language barrier
- ✓ Single parents requiring childcare.
- ✓ Encourage Big Book tape study meetings in each district.
- ✓ Encourage groups to provide childcare.
- ✓ Update special-needs information on Where & When's.
- ✓ Bring meetings into the home, hospital, or long-term care facilities; encourage
- ✓ districts and groups to support regular meetings in special-needs facilities.
- ✓ Provide literature and hold workshops on special needs.
- ✓ Explore other special needs; work with GSO and other districts & areas.

### How We Serve:

- ✓ Provide interpreters for meetings and events.
- ✓ Provide Braille A.A. literature and programs for special events.
- ✓ Assist the physically disabled at events; provide rides in special cases.
- ✓ Encourage wheelchair-accessible meetings and events.

**Special Needs/Accessibility Committee: Contact: Carly R (chair)**  
[racinespecialneeds@gmail.com](mailto:racinespecialneeds@gmail.com)

*And For That, I Am Responsible !*

## District 17 Corrections

For those looking to jumpstart their involvement in service work, District 17 is in need of help in carrying the message to those in the Corrections system. There are many positions that fall under the heading of Corrections service work—Corrections Correspondence Service, Pre-release Contact Program, and AA meetings on the inside, to name a few. For those interested in getting involved—please contact Steve N. (Area 75 District 17 Corrections Committee Chair) at **(262) 939-9676** or [nova221sgn@wi.rr.com](mailto:nova221sgn@wi.rr.com).

## Upcoming Events & Activities

### Fridays in June

Young at Heart  
“New Young Peoples Meeting”  
The Benjamin House  
6:00pm

### July 2nd—July 5th

International AA Convention  
Atlanta, GA

### Saturday, July 11th

RACO Steering Committee mtg  
Racine Area Central Office  
9:30-10:30am

### Saturday, July 11th

Grove Club Picnic  
Pritchard Park  
11:30 - 6:00ish

### Saturday, July 18th

Grove Club board elections  
Grove Club, Racine, WI

### August 14th-16th

Green Lake Round-Up  
Green Lake, WI

### Saturday, August 22nd

Dist. 36 Fun & Fellowship Day!  
Christ Lutheran Church  
Paddock Lake, WI  
11am-3pm



# Racine Area Central Office FINANCIALS

Donation Detail	May
Anonymous donations	35.90
Benjamin House - People, Places & Things	26.75
Benjamin House, 10:00am Sun. Newcomers	7.00
Benjamin House, 10:00 a.m. Sun. Dwnstrs	20.00
Benjamin House, 6PM Monday, 12x12	14.00
Benjamin House Saturday 7AM Cellar Dwellers	10.00
Benjamin House Saturday 10AM Big Book	6.00
Grove Friday Night 5:30 Big Book	60.00
Grove Sunday 7:30 speaker Meeting	41.00
Racine Transitional Care	50.00
RACO, Weds. 7:00 BB	50.00
Union Grove United Church of Christ WED pm	20.00
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>340.65</b>

## Additional RACO Notes



### RACO Steering Committee Meetings



The Racine Area Central Office's 'Steering Committee' meets on the first Saturday of every month at RACO. The Steering Committee invites anyone who may be interested in Area 75 and District 17 events and happenings.

The Committee also currently has a few open positions available (which can be seen on Page 6 of the this edition of The Reprive). Check it out!

If you or someone you know might

be interested in sitting-in on a Committee meeting or possibly filling an open position, please join us for a monthly meeting or email [raconewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:raconewsletter@gmail.com) for information on available positions and position requirements.

We look forward to seeing you at the next Committee meeting!



# Help is Everywhere

## District/Club Information

<b>District 17</b>		<b>Racine, Wisconsin</b>
Racine Alano Club 1140 Douglas Ave. Racine, WI 53404 (262) 634-9902	The Grove Club 1037 Grove Ave. Racine, WI 53405 (262) 634-9656	Benjamin House 4848 Highway H Franksville, WI 53126 (262) 886-9611
Benjamin House Website: <a href="http://www.benjaminhouseracine.org/">http://www.benjaminhouseracine.org/</a>		
<b>District 7</b>		<b>Kenosha, Wisconsin</b>
Kenosha Alano Club 630 56 <sup>th</sup> St. Kenosha, WI 53140 (262) 654-8246	Outcasts 1310 63 <sup>rd</sup> St. Kenosha, WI 53144	Club Breakaway 8017 Sheridan Rd. Kenosha, WI 53143 (262) 653-9800
Kenosha Alano Club Website: <a href="http://kenoshaalanoclub.org">http://kenoshaalanoclub.org</a>		
<b>District 36</b>		Burlington 12 x 12 Club 724 N. Pine St. Burlington, WI
<b>West Racine/Kenosha County</b>		
<b>District 6</b>		Walworth County Alano Club 611 E. Walworth St. Delavan, WI 53115 (262) 740-1888
<b>Eastern Walworth County</b>		
<b>District 12</b>		<b>Eastern Lake County, Illinois</b>
Alano Club of Waukegan 2419 Washington St. Waukegan, IL 60085 (847) 662-9640	Zion-Benton Alano Club 228 Sheridan Rd. Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096 (847) 746-9842	
Alano Club of Waukegan Website: <a href="http://alanoclubwaukegan.com/">http://alanoclubwaukegan.com/</a>		
Waukegan Hotline: (847) 623-9660		
<b>District 10</b>		Antioch Recovery Club 311 E Depot St.; Suite C Antioch, IL 60002 (847) 838-1882
<b>Western Lake County</b>		
Antioch Recovery Club: <a href="http://www.antiochrecoveryclub.org/">http://www.antiochrecoveryclub.org/</a>		
Antioch Hotline: (847) 395-5988		

Alcoholics Anonymous is not affiliated with any club or other outside enterprise

## Racine Area Central Office

### Officers/Steering Committee

Chairperson	Roxann D.
Co-Chairperson	VACANT
Secretary	Courtney K.
Co-Secretary	VACANT
Treasurer	Pam L.
Co-Treasurer	Jessica H.
Staffing Coordinator	John B.
Co-Staffing Coordinator	Bruce P.
Newsletter	Kevin B.
Co-Newsletter	VACANT
Hotline Chairperson	Mark S.
Co-Hotline Chairperson	Jon K.
Literature Chairperson	Rachel S.
Co-Literature Chair	Deb K.
Procurement	Steve K.
Webmaster	Courtney L.
Co-Webmaster	Brian K.
Advisor	Darrel S.
3701 Durand Avenue #225B	
Racine, WI 53403	
(262) 554-6611	
24-Hour Hotline: (262) 554-7788	

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