

# CONCEPTS

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Northern Illinois Area, LTD. Area 20 Service Letter

Spring 2020



Has it been five years already since the last International Convention? I am truly fortunate enough to say that this will be my fourth International. I love everything about this very large A.A. event. Sometimes it is weird that I see members from my own district that I had served with in the past and haven't seen since the last international. I am truly excited for this year's convention as to hopefully run into many of the past delegates that I served with at the GSC. Of course there are usually a lot of NIA 20 members in attendance.

If you have never been to an International Convention please, if you see some lonely person in the middle of a room with a sign that say "Free Hugs" take advantage of it. The things we hear and experience about the fellowship on our rides before and after meetings are multiplied several times with the fellowship on the shuttle busses to and from the hotels or points of interest. The hospitality rooms are a must hit early in the convention if you are a collector of buttons or A.A. stuff from other areas.

Below is a part of the report from the Chair of the Host Area volunteer welcome committee, Carlyle W. The report was presented at the ECR Conference of Delegates and Past and present last year.

The 2020 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 2–5, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan with the theme "Love and Tolerance is our Code." A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 85th year at this event—with big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Ford Field Stadium. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the COBO Center in downtown Detroit.

Ongoing updates will be available on the G.S.O. website [aa.org](http://aa.org) as Convention time approaches. Also, watch for articles in Box 4-5-9, which is mailed to the general service representative of every group in the U.S. and Canada listed with G.S.O. and is also posted on the website. Last August of 2019, information about Convention registration and housing reservations will be included in the registration packet which was mailed to all current G.S.R.s & D.C.M.s, central offices & inter-groups, and international G.S.O.s and will be posted on [aa.org](http://aa.org). This packet will list numbers to call for answers to specific questions about housing, the program, etc.

Online registration opened on September 9, 2019. Registration fees are \$115.00 per person until April 15, 2020 and \$140.00 per person after that date. On-site registration will be available at the COBO Center and will open on Wednesday morning, July 1, 2020. Once you have registered for the Convention, you will be able to sign up for housing. To make the process as fair as possible, all housing requests will be made through the Convention Housing Bureau. Also, an effort will be made to accommodate group housing requests, and a special procedure is in place for that purpose. For information on this procedure, please contact the International Convention coordinator at G.S.O. at [2020IC@aa.org](mailto:2020IC@aa.org).

The Welcome Committee Core will assist the General Service Office in planning a Welcome Committee structure that will be of maximum service to the thousands of volunteers and hence to Convention attendees. The Welcome Committee's primary responsibility is to facilitate guests' participation in all of the A.A. events from Thursday evening through Sunday morning.

The Volunteer Welcome Committee Kick-off meeting took place in Detroit in January of 2020, with volunteer sign-up access to open up soon after that date. To register (sign up) to be a volunteer on one, or more, of the fifteen Volunteer Subcommittees, please stay tuned. Around the time of the Kick-off meeting, everyone within our Region will be given the sign-up website, along with the date and time that the website will go live. Finally, G.S.O. has produced a video flyer promoting the Detroit 2020 International Convention, and you can watch by visiting:

<https://internationalconvention.visitdetroit.com>  
Kelly L.

Past Delegate – P66



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# What is Happening?

February 14-16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 I will attend (or already have attended) the “**Conference of Delegates Past and Present**”. In past years I have attended but I was not allowed to speak; only to watch and learn. This year I can participate with the other 13 Delegates in our East Central Region.

Just a little background: Area 20 is within the East Central Region along with the other two areas in Illinois, and the states of Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana. This weekend conference in Novi, Michigan, will help us become familiar with what the 70<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference (GSC) in April 2020 will be like. We will be given an “agenda item” that is usually a hot topic. This agenda item is not really going to be on the agenda for the 70<sup>th</sup> GSC. It is only to help us practice working through the process so that we are well prepared for New York. I really appreciate this so that I won’t have that look like the “deer in the headlights”. I can’t wait to hear what the topic is going to be and how everyone works through the process.

April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Area 20 will be at the Church of the Brethren, 15071 Luther Ave, Lombard to have our **Pre-General Service Conference Workshop**. In all there are 83 agenda items. Each committee will have their own breakout meeting and discuss

their agenda items. For example, the Treatment /Accessibilities Committee will get together and discuss five agenda items. All the other committees will do the same thing. Then after about an hour or so we will return to the main room and each committee will give a report on their own agenda items. The committees will tell us if they agreed with the agenda items, if they disagreed with them or had any suggestions. In this way I will have an idea of how Area 20 wants me to vote when I am at the Conference. You can go to any breakout meeting that interests you. This is your opportunity to make a difference and have a voice in what goes on in A.A. All are welcome. I would love to hear from you.

April 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, I will attend the **70<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference** in New York. In 1955 at the Fifth Annual General Service Conference in St. Louis, the Co-Founders, Bill W. and Dr. Bob along with the Trustees, turned A.A. over to the groups. *“This ceremony is followed by the concluding talks of Lois and Bill marking the end of an era and the beginning of the time when A.A. assumes full responsibility for its own affairs (Pg. 223 AA Comes of Age).”*

It took a lot of work to get to that point. Since I have been reading “A.A. Comes of Age” I really appreciate what those pioneers did for you and me. Now we, the members, have a voice. Why do we need this conference? Please read the article

below written by Bernard B. Smith, who was one of the non-alcoholic Trustees.

### Why Do We Need a Conference?

*The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting; "We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.*

*"We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing over-integration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps,*

*its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services.*

*"We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is." (Page S20 The A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service)*

POWERFUL. RIGHT?

Thank you.

Marilyn F.



# Twelve Concepts for World Service

In 1960 at the tenth General Service Conference Bill W. addressed the delegates to discuss communication and the evolution of service in Alcoholics Anonymous. During his remarks he said the following:

In connection with this service conference, I have been trying to do a set of interpretive essays, or rather articles, and have cast up a new batch of points called "Twelve Concepts for World Service." You'll remember that our Third Legacy Manual, (now known as *The A.A. Service Manual*) except for its brief historical sketch, is a manual of procedure. It tells you the *how* – how we serve as group representatives, as committeemen, as delegates, as trustees, directors, staff and so on. Now, these essays would attempt, on the basis of the lessons of the past and of our history, to show the *why* of it. How did we happen to get related together in this way, and what have been the lessons? – *Our Great Responsibility*, p. 104 - 105

The Concepts are Bill's attempt to show why our service structure was built the way

it was and how that came to be. That means that the Concepts, much like the Steps and Traditions are based on experience. They are based on the lessons and mistakes of the past.

While the Concepts are written to address service at the level of the General Service Conference and General Service Board they apply at all levels of service.

The Concepts are undoubtedly the least understood of our 36 principles even though, if you are involved in service at any level, you're almost assuredly applying them in your activities. For me, much like the Big Book, understanding the Concepts required the guidance of others more experienced in service.

That said, and as a mere introduction, I offer the Very Short Form of the Twelve Concepts for World Service.

## **Concept One - Final responsibility and ultimate authority**

Bill discusses the origin and history of the group conscience. Referencing Tradition Two, *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*, Bill makes the case that all authority in the fellowship originates with the membership and it's the membership that is ultimately responsible for all our services.



**Concept two - The General Service Conference is the effective conscience of our whole Society**

Recognizing that the fellowship as a whole cannot effectively express its group conscience, that responsibility is delegated by the fellowship to elected delegates participating in the General Service Conference.

**Concept Three - Right of Decision**

Trusted servants are not bound to the group conscience. Instead they have the authority and responsibility to make decisions based on their individual conscience and the best interest of A.A. as a whole. Likewise, committees, boards and assemblies, etc. have the right to choose which matters they will decide upon and when they will seek guidance or counsel from the groups or committees they are responsible to.

**Concept Four - Right of Participation**

The right of participation suggests a relationship between responsibility and voting authority. At all levels of service, trusted servants with a responsibility should be vested with a voting authority at that level.

**Concept Five - Right of Appeal**

The right of appeal is familiar to many through the minority opinion procedure when voting at business meetings of various kinds. It insures that all voices have an opportunity to be heard and prevents

decisions from being made rashly.

**Concept Six - Chief initiative and active responsibility General Service Board**

While the General Service Conference traditionally has the final decision on matters of policy or finance, the General Service Board typically initiates policy and financial planning, while their subsidiary corporations, A.A. World Services and the Grapevine, Inc. administer these duties on a day to day basis.

**Concept Seven - Charter and Bylaws of the GSB legal instruments Conference Charter not a legal document**

Concept Seven describes the relationship of the General Service Board and the General Service Conference. The former is a legal entity having legal authority to manage A.A. World Services while the latter is a spiritual entity relying on A.A. tradition and the power of the purse for final effectiveness.

**Concept Eight - The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy**

The trustees of the General Service Board do not directly manage the affairs of A.A. world service. Instead they maintain custodial oversight over their subsidiary boards, A.A. World Services and the A.A. Grapevine. But ultimately the G.S.B. is responsible for both the activities and the financial health of its subsidiaries.

**Concept Nine - Good service leadership is indispensable for our future functioning**

Bill discusses qualifications and selection procedures for our trusted servants. He points out that we can establish a workable and effective structure but even the best structure relies on competent and effective leadership.

**Concept Ten - Responsibility matched by an equal service authority**

There is a relationship between responsibility and authority. Each must be well defined at all levels. Ultimate authority should not be used indiscriminately while delegated authority is performing well.

**Concept Eleven - The composition of trustee committees, their qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.**

Bill describes the committees of the General Service Board, as they were when he wrote the essays, the corporate structure and paid workers at the office.

**Concept Twelve - The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be**

**personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.**

Sometimes referred to as our bill of rights this concept is included in the Conference Charter as the General Warranties of the Conference. The Twelve Traditions and the Warranties are considered so important that while they can be changed, the Conference Charter requires the approval of three quarters of all groups worldwide to do so.

By: Larry S.



# On the Newcomer to A.A.

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Alcoholism- that tragic and enigmatic specter that haunts, drives, and compels us to the gates of insanity and death, has, as we have all come to understand, a solution. That solution is honesty, humility, willingness, and open-mindedness. These elements are the opposite of that which we are told is the cause of our problem to begin with: dishonesty, pride, self-reliance and closed-mindedness- our Spiritual Malady, if you will. Having no God but ourselves, we seek to run our own lives in every aspect, until, thwarted by the cross-purposes of our ailment, we eventually run those lives into the ground.

This turn of events, while a very clear outcome to any casual observer, or acquaintance who has seen our forays into drunkenness, actually shock and surprise us. Finding ourselves homeless, jobless, spouse-less, friendless, penniless, we shake our fists at the heavens, and blame the God we've ignored for the problems we've created. Then we continue to do this, until that Psychic Change occurs that turns our thinking completely around, and we realize that without His help, we are certainly doomed. This is the Progress promised us in AA's literature.

Yet, how do we convey this same message- Surrender; complete and unconditional, to the Newcomer in such a way as to not only

get their attention, but to pierce the denial and delusion that they have a problem that cannot be solved by greater effort, and more exertion of their self-will?

According to the Big Book, (p 30), the first step in recovery, is to concede to our innermost selves that we are alcoholics. It goes on to say, that the delusion we carry; that we are like other people- at least for the moment- has to be smashed.

That is the FIRST Step. The beginning point. The place where our ideas of self, and God, and life, and the future are poured into a crucible and then re-made.

AA is that crucible, and the first step meeting for the newcomer, is the heat under that crucible.

For the most part, people come to meetings, nowadays, after having spent some time in rehab, detox, jail, or the hospital. It is becoming rare to have someone come in off the street who has no experiences in any of those places, or is ignorant to the AA Program. Rather, they come to us with ideas and education and experiences gained and given them from other sources who may elude to, or quote, or mimic Alcoholics Anonymous, but which are certainly not Alcoholics Anonymous.

These ideas may be sound, may be accurate, may be effective, but they must also correlate effectively with the texts of Alcoholics Anonymous, in order to integrate that Newcomer to a way of life that will help to ensure their permanent sobriety



through the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, and most of all, practice.

Working with a Newcomer demands, on our parts, a singular focus: smash the denial and delusion that they may someday drink like other people. As long as they harbor any suspicion that this might be possible- that they may once again return to drinking to no ill effect- they are certain to then act on that suspicion at some point, proving unequivocally, and in some cases, fatally, that they are, in fact, insanely thinking, and that their delusion was always greater than their own will power.

The old Timers knew this. They pulled no punches when it came to pointing out the insane ideas and flaws in our thinking. They sternly held us to account by reminding us that our own ideas and actions are what doomed us to failure, and that only by internalizing and utilizing The Program, and by that, AA means seeking God- could we ever hope to overcome that condition.

The chapter, WORKING WITH OTHERS, speaks for itself. I will point out, however, that in contemporary practice, it does not so much resemble what the text advises, as much as how Group Therapy may be conducted. This has been a detriment to many who come through the door expecting real help. Help comes in many forms- patience, kindness, care, a listening ear, a compassionate attitude. These things are all well and good in application at the appropriate time. But we must remember the state of mind that the Newcomer

Alcoholic brings with them- dishonesty, pride, denial, delusion, and in many cases, blame of others for the results of their own decisions. The approach to the newcomer at this juncture may be compassion, but compassion in the form of the truth- as brutal as that may seem to them. The truth that they will not beat alcoholism without help, without change, and without honesty. Yes, Love and Tolerance of others is our code, but sometimes that Love and Tolerance needs to be applied as the Big Book suggests it be so- with a hug, a cup of coffee, and swift kick in the pants.

The first two to show them that we care and understand and are willing to take the time to spend with them to help them beat their problem using the Steps, the Traditions and the Concepts. The second to show that we mean real business, and that we take this very deadly condition as seriously as it needs to be: that without help (God and our compatriots in AA), it is too much for the real alcoholic, and it will eventually result in insanity, incarceration, or death.

Or worse.

Working with the Newcomer involves loving them, encouraging them, repeatedly reminding them that things will get better if they follow the Steps, inviting them back, pushing them to change, and when needs be, correcting their pride to correct their course. They may not care to hear that last part, and others in a similar mind to their own may also take exception, but it has also

been posited that Old Ideas will fight the hardest to remain, when they are about to be done away with.

Progress- in whatever form that takes- is what we are after. Honesty, Humility, Willingness and Open-Mindedness are the tools to ensure that Progress. We are obligated to share them with the Newcomer.

By: Rick S.

## I was thinking:

I've been to a lot of meetings where someone is at their very first A.A. meeting and the group wants to do a "First Step Meeting" for them. In most cases this involves having the new comer sit and listen to anywhere from 4 to 8 people tell their stories all without letting the new comer say anything. I've noticed that a lot of these new comers don't come back. I don't know if that is because they start attending another meeting or if they don't come back to A.A. at all, but it concerns me.

When I read the chapter "Working With Others," I don't see the above scenario described anywhere. Instead Bill writes a lot about how to work with someone individually and starting off by asking the prospect to tell about himself first.

A number of years ago I was attending a meeting on Thursday nights and this topic came up. A group of us got together and started talking about a better way; one that was consistent with the instructions in the Big Book. We met for several months going through the book and talking about what we would want a "First Step" to look like in a group setting. What we came up with was a guide that we adopted for our meeting and have made available to others who have requested it. It is pretty basic and describes the scenario where two people, and only two people, take the new comer aside. The following is a synopsis of the guide:

First of all make sure that the new comer understands that they can ask questions or make comments at ANY time; to feel free to interrupt whoever is speaking in order to ask or make these comments. Emphasis that this is THEIR meeting, we are there FOR them.

Ask them why they thought they should come to an A.A. meeting in the first place and listen for any comments they share about their drinking that you can relate to or any stories that you share in common with them - for later use (when you start sharing your story you can share how you drank the same as them - if you did). Also, listen for any feeling type words such as despair, loneliness, boredom, etc. that you also felt.

Spend a FEW minutes sharing your own experience, with alcohol. Why you identify yourself as an alcoholic (use similar experiences to them if you can) focusing on feelings as much as you can and how you became a member of A.A.

Give the new comer a chance to respond to your story before going on, and then review the following from the Big Book:

- Doctor's Opinion - the allergy of the body/phenomenon of craving, alcoholic life seems normal, restless irritable and discontent, obsession of the mind, types of alcoholics, the need for an entire psychic change.
- Foreword to the First Edition - first paragraph (we have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body), the purpose of the book is to show precisely how we recovered.
- More About Alcoholism - had to fully concede that we were alcoholic \* the first step in recovery, pg. 33 once an alcoholic always an alcoholic, pg. 34 utter inability to leave it alone no matter how great the necessity or the wish, pg. 43 no mental defense against the first drink our defense must come from a Higher Power.
- There is a Solution - common solution, pg. 23 the problem is in the mind, pg. 24 we are without defense against the first drink, pg. 25 we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences, only two

options \* go on to the bitter end or accept spiritual help.

- We Agnostics - pg. 45 that's exactly what this book is about \* its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.

Make sure you offer the new comer a Big Book, give them your phone number and, **this is important**, get their phone number, tell them you are going to call them - tomorrow, call them and take them to another meeting if they will let you. DON'T wait for them to call you. CALL them and take them to another meeting. INTRODUCE them to other members. For now YOU are their sponsor, if they will let you.

What we found, when we started doing this, is that a lot of the people came back; a lot answered their phone the next day and went to a meeting with the caller. In fact, I have a sponsee, to this day, that I took through this process one Thursday night.

I, along with the others who put this together, believe that this is much more in keeping with what Bill would do and follows, as best we could, with the instructions in our book.

Anyway; I was just thinking.

Robert S

# Is It Time for Service?

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If you have ever asked yourself “is this all there is to recovery?” you may be ready for service in Alcoholics Anonymous. This would be a good time to sit down with a sponsor, get an honest appraisal as to where you could best serve, and ask how to get started. Don’t think you have anything to offer? Think again. Regardless of where we are in our recovery journey, if we have been working the steps and practicing the principles to the best of our ability, there is a place where we can be useful to others.

People sometimes think “service” in A.A. only occurs at the District or the Area. Those are a couple of places where we can serve (more on that later) but you can start out in the very groups where you attend meetings. In some respects, Alcoholics Anonymous is not unlike other large organizations, with levels of opportunity throughout. In an autonomous group setting, and depending on the size and structure, a group needs all sorts of assistance to sustain and thrive. Are you outgoing? Offer to greet newcomers and others as they come through the door. Less extroverted? Maybe setting up A.A. literature is more appealing. Organized? Maintain the phone list to provide to newcomers. Enjoy controversy? Be coffee maker. There are also service positions such as chairing meetings, serving as group treasurer, open up, clean up, “speaker

seeker”, and so much more. Each position is different and what is required for each varies by group, but all are needed and for many, the most important requirement is a willingness to learn, commit, and be accountable.

If you have interest in becoming the General Service Representative (GSR) for your group, congratulations! The GSR is the very foundation of our General Service Structure. Through the GSR, we make our group’s voice heard at District meetings, at Area Assemblies and each year at the General Service Conference. You are the liaison between your group and A.A. as a whole. Your representation at the District is an introduction to the Alcoholics Anonymous committee structure, another level of opportunity. You are able to communicate, plan, share ideas, and problem solve with others GSRs from across the District. This was one of my favorite positions in A.A. I felt as though I was able to bring valuable information to my group members that they might not have been previously aware of, and in turn, make our District aware of how our group felt about issues of importance to the fellowship. Being GSR opened up all sorts of possibilities that I never even knew existed and piqued my interest in how Alcoholics Anonymous functioned as a spiritual entity outside of my own personal recovery at the group level.

Not everyone needs to be in charge of a committee. Some of the most fun and greatest accomplishment can take place

simply being IN the committee, where the action is. Where the work gets done. Where you are a part of, not apart from. Committee Chairs and Alternate Committee Chairs need to have enthusiastic, passionate people in their committees in order to make things happen. What kinds of things? Being the life-saving voice at the end of a call to the A.A. Answering Service. Carrying a message of hope into treatment centers and correctional facilities. Bringing a newcomer to local A.A. meetings via Bridging the Gap. Helping to make A.A. accessible and available for all. Having updated, A.A. Conference-approved literature available and working with our Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community trusted servants so we can share with the rest of the world what we know to be true – this is a design for living. Preserving our rich and vibrant A.A. history with Archives and sharing members' stories of recovery through awareness and distribution of Grapevine and La Vina. Within the District there is opportunity for those who wish to share in communicating District information through newsletter and website. And if none of that is of interest, who doesn't love to throw a party? There is always picnic

and holiday party planning for those who miss those days of entertaining large groups of people who still love to have a good time! There really is something for everyone in A.A., again - if you're just willing to learn, commit, and be accountable.

All of this can prepare you for continued service "down" the upside-down triangle of our unique service structure at the Area and beyond, if you choose. Most of our current and past Delegates started as GSRs of their home groups. All of our Area trusted servants and many alcoholics serving as trusted servants within the General Service structure have served in a variety of other capacities before taking on the positions they have now. Serving in Alcoholics Anonymous at all levels has helped prepare me to be a better employee, a better sponsor, and an overall better human. When it came time for me to ask the question "was I ready for something more?" I needed to look no further than Bill's reminder in the Chapter "Into Action" on our real purpose, which is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us. *Serve well!*

Lisa S.

## 2020 Events

**Mar 20-22** NIA Spring Conference & Assembly - @ Chicago Marriott Schaumburg

**Apr 4** Pre-General Service Conference Workshop @ Lord of Life Lutheran Church - 40W605 IL Route 38, Elburn, IL 60119

**Apr 18** Area 87 (Montreal) Big Book Conference @ Ahuntsic College

**Apr 19** 69th General Service Conference @ Rye Brook, NY

**May 9** Swing Into Spring 18th Annual Dinner and Speaker @ KaySee Club Hall - 806 Oakley Avenue, Streator, IL

**May 16** Spring Committee Meeting @ Lord of Life Lutheran Church - 40W605 IL Route 38, Elburn, IL 60119

**Jun 13** Summer Assembly - Hosted by District 52, Kankakee, IL

**Jul 2-5** 2020 International Convention "Love and Tolerance is Our Code" @ Cobo Center in Detroit, MI

**Aug 8** Summer Committee Meeting @ Lord of Life Lutheran Church - 40W605 IL Route 38, Elburn, IL 60119

**Aug 14-16** 47th Annual Illinois State Conference - Hosted by Area 19, Chicago

**Sep 11-13** Bridging the Gap Weekend Workshop - Rock Island, IL

**Sep 19** Fall Assembly - Hosted by District 22, Elgin, IL

**Oct 17** Fall Committee Meeting - Hosted by District 40 @ Lord of Life Lutheran Church - 40W605 IL Route 38, Elburn, IL 60119

**Oct 24** Big Book Conference - Hosted by District 10 & 12, Grayslake, IL

**Nov 13-15** National Correction Conference @ Schaumburg Hyatt

**Dec 12** Winter Assembly - TBD

For more information or directions to the events, please check the NIA website for details.



## **What is NIA?**

The principal function of Northern Illinois service Area 20 is to be a forum for effective communication between the Groups and the General Service Conference through its Delegate. In addition to counseling its Delegate about the collective Group Conscience of the Fellowship in Northern Illinois, NIA will assist its Districts, Groups and members to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers in a broad variety of ways, including but not restricted to conducting workshops, sharing sessions and seminars in all fields of general service.

## **NIA Statement on Self-Support**

Our Seventh Tradition states that "Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." Northern Illinois Area 20 wants our fellowship to endure, and be ready for the still-suffering alcoholic to come. NIA makes this possible by taking care of its essential services such as website. The groups and districts in Area 20 fund this website thru their continued contributions and support. For additional information see the A.A. pamphlet regarding self-support.

## **NIA Statement on Singleness of Purpose**

Our Third and Fifth Traditions state that "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking." "Each Group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. And as a Fellowship we do one thing only: "- share our program of recovery."

**Concepts is published quarterly by the Northern Illinois Area of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is intended as a form of communication between Northern IL Area, Districts, and GSRs. Subscription is free but generally limited to A.A. members within the NIA geographical area. All publication costs are paid by A.A. members through their contributions to NIA. Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the thinking of Alcoholics Anonymous, NIA or the Editor. Comments, suggestions, subscription requests, and experience, strength and hope, should be directed to the editor: Concepts@aa-nia.org**

**All A.A. members are encouraged to see Concepts on-line at: <http://www.aa-nia.org>**

**"CONCEPTS" is a confidential document. It should be used and distributed within the Fellowship.**

**DUE DATE FOR THE SUMMER ISSUE OF THE**

**CONCEPTS NEWSLETTER IS MAY 9, 2019**

