

# MYNAH BIRD

## Hawai'i Area 17 Newsletter

Read online here:



SEPTEMBER 2023

BUDGET ASSEMBLY

## An Ongoing Threat to A.A. as a Whole – Singleness of Purpose

This issue is dedicated to carrying the message of unity and singleness of purpose to all members that we encounter as we collectively trudge this road of happy destiny!

This article will rely on our Three Legacies and our Traditions as follows:

### The Three Legacies: Recovery, Unity And Service.

The suggestions for recovery are the Twelve Steps.

The suggestions for achieving unity are the Twelve Traditions.

The suggestions for service are described in Twelve Concepts for World Service, The AA Service Manual and Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age.

### Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on A.A. unity.

### Tradition Three

The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

### Tradition Five

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

### Tradition Six

An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

### Tradition Ten

Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

#### Singleness of Purpose

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#### Helpful Links

used for this issue

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#### Grapevine APP ... coming soon!

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#### A.A. Acronym fun ...

“So we need to constantly scrutinize ourselves carefully, in order to make everlastingly certain that we shall always be strong enough and single-purposed enough from within, to relate ourselves rightly to the world without.”

— Bill Wilson, [The Language of the Heart](#)—Bill W.'s Grapevine Writings

*Reprinted from P-35 Problems Other Than Alcohol with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc*

“Our first duty, as a society, is to ensure our own survival. Therefore, we have to avoid distractions and multipurpose activity. An AA group, as such, cannot take on all the personal problems of its members, let alone the problems of the whole world.

Sobriety – freedom from alcohol – through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps is the sole purpose of an AA group. Groups have repeatedly tried other activities, and they have always failed. It has also been learned that there is no possible way to make nonalcoholics into AA members. We have to confine our membership to alcoholics, and we have to confine our AA groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone.”

### **A MEMBER'S EXPERIENCE:**

When I first started thinking about stepping forward to speak out about this topic, it was my belief that each time A.A. published another major piece of literature that A.A. had returned to the traditions and its roots. I no longer think that. I think that the threat to A.A. has gotten progressively worse and that we are now at yet another breaking point that requires all members to rally around this tradition.

Our meetings are filled with people who have not read and/or do not understand the second and third of our legacies (unity and Service). Indeed, there are many opinions, and some loud voices are NOT newcomers but those with long-term sobriety who perhaps also do not seem to understand the importance of our Singleness of Purpose.

Outside influences, (sects, denominations, organizations, and institutions) engage in concerted efforts to equate/blend drugs and alcohol and compulsions of any kind as the same affliction. These institutions, including rehabs, the criminal justice system, various hospitals, churches, the pharmaceutical industry (that could be held accountable for the current opioid epidemic), turn out a constant stream of newly rehabbed individuals who treat the A.A. meetings and indeed the program as being able to address both alcoholism and drug addiction as the same disease. Some may even feel the need to lie about whether they are alcoholic.

IMHO\*, some institutions have no respect for our second and third legacies, along with the traditions and the concepts because it just might affect their bottom line. These organizations get more taxpayer/donation/admission fees and money when they combine and provide a 'one-stop shop.' (\*In my humble opinion)

Bill and our earliest members certainly witnessed this fracture in purpose time and again and took action to document the full intent of our fellowship, our steps to recovery and our service structure. (see next insert)

Perhaps the question is this: Are outside influences, who are now receiving consistent and often large amounts of money, where there are set policies that simply ignore A.A.s Traditions and Concepts and in some cases, A.A. itself\*? Are they, in effect rebranding A.A. for their "clients." The net effect is that the brand name continues, but unless we act and stand for the principles of A.A. as newcomers enter our meetings, the implementation of those principles will continue to deteriorate.

### **I Am An Alcoholic And-uh....**

When I first got to A.A. in 1988, I found a very healthy group on the North Shore of Nassau County, NY. By healthy I mean that we stuck to the literature that included discussions of the steps AND the traditions and along with sponsorship of individuals to help with their personal inventory. We also did group inventories. The first of those the old-timer facilitating the inventory said something I had never heard - "There should be no "And Uhs" in Alcoholics Anonymous" This has since been restated by many trusted elders over my 35 years and now by me.

*(\*editor's note: Local articles will not be included in the link section as they are an outside issue, but you can certainly google and keep up with local institutions and their policies/practices.)*

With the beginning of Zoom meetings and particularly one meeting I regularly attend where the topic focuses on the three legacies every Saturday, I have been forced to rethink my initial thought process that was intended to keep me safe and critique-free. In my quiet times has reoccurred this thought - "Ann, grow a thicker skin." I accept my duty to A.A. as a whole and with renewed intent, I try to convey my belief /message on the topic of singleness of purpose whenever I share.

Additionally, I realized is that when someone does introduce themselves as an alcoholic "and a" drug addict, I was judging from the **ego's point of view**, making assumptions about the individual's motives when **I really don't know their true intent by using that introduction.**

Could such an introduction perhaps be based on lack of knowledge of the twelves traditions and concepts? (and hence underlying the necessity for me to help carry the message) ... and perhaps in the case of someone new and even in cheekiness to those who have many years sober?

If you introduce yourself as an alcoholic and-uh drug addict – please give deep thought to your reasons and discuss it with your sponsor.

- Did someone tell you to say that?
- Are you just doing what you hear many others doing?
- It sounds fresh, or YOU feel that introductions tells your full story.

I have had folks lecturing me in Chat and then in verbal shares during the meeting as to my intent on singleness of purpose and not being 'all inclusive'. Again, in my opinion, those folks are NOT practicing "Love and Tolerance of Other's Is Our Code" by any stretch of the imagination. Could I be accused of the same? I suggest that thoughtful conversations, in your home group's group conscience, should guide these discussions and the decision of the group conscience.

If you fall into the category of "Because I have both problems" or I am "multi-addicted" ... please consider out of respect for our traditions, (not just five, but also 1, 3, 6, and 10) and create an atmosphere for yourself to be teachable and capture a deeper understanding of the reason that A.A. works. Our traditions are intended to maintain full focus on overcoming the denial of dependance on alcohol, finding a spiritual solution ... all through identification of one alcoholic with another.

When attending an A.A. meeting, I introduce myself as an alcoholic with full respect to the attendees and to the complete intent of the program.

## Referring to the Singleness of

### Purpose Newsletter of April-May 2004:

The guidelines for that situation are clear. In a 1958 Grapevine article, "Problems Other Than Alcohol," Bill W. wrote: "Our first duty, as a Society, is to insure our own survival. Therefore we have to avoid distractions and multipurpose activities. Sobriety – freedom from alcohol – through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps, is the sole purpose of an A.A. group. . . . We have to confine our membership to alcoholics, and we have to confine our A.A. groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone."

How to handle dually addicted alcoholics who persist in talking about other problems in meetings is a murkier issue. In that same article, Bill writes about "one of the best A.A.s I know" – a man who had been doing drugs for years before joining A.A., "but prior to that he had been a terrific alcoholic. Therefore he could qualify for A.A. and this he certainly did."

### Final thoughts

- I will do my best to invite my Higher Power to show me how to go through this process by respecting A.A. and channeling the Love that has given the world this incredible gift.
- I will pledge to serve A.A. beyond the group level when I feel called.
- I have a hope that we may have some open-minded, useful conversations, based in love, about this critically important issue.

Respectively submitted in love, service, and recovery,  
Ann F. / Honolulu, HI

**HOW DID WE GET HERE?** A timeline of Alcoholics Anonymous (For the lengthy version google A.A. timeline at <https://www.aa.org/aa-timeline> Suggested reading: A.A. Comes of Age and/or Language of the Heart.)

## June 10, 1935

... singled out as the beginning of A.A., which is the day when Dr. Bob met Bill W. and had his last drink.

## 1938

Creation of the Alcoholic Foundation. To receive these inquiries (as A.A. became more well known), to administer royalties from this book and such other funds as may come to hand, a Trust has been created known as The Alcoholic Foundation. Seven Trustees are members of Alcoholics Anonymous, the other eight are well-known business and professional men who have volunteered their services.

## 1939

The publication of the Big Book of A.A. Includes the 12 steps of A.A. and the foundation for recovery from this hopeless disease.

Clarence Snyder told Dr. Bob, his sponsor, he would not be back to the Oxford Group meetings in Akron and would start an "A.A." meeting in Cleveland. May 11 - The first meeting that used the name "Alcoholics Anonymous" was held in Cleveland one month after the Big Book had been published.

## 1941

Jack Alexander article for Saturday Evening Post published. The publication of this article resulted in a deluge of requests for help from around the country.

## 1946

Long form of 12 Traditions was published in AA Grapevine for the first time.

As a result of the favorable publicity chaos descended on the fledging band of A.A.s. It appeared to many that A.A. might self-destruct like the Washingtonians (a 19th-century temperance fellowship that was founded in 1840 in Baltimore, MD). Bill W. was inspired to write what would be the first iteration of the 12 Traditions. He penned an article for the Grapevine entitled "Twelve Suggested Points for A.A. Tradition."

## 1951

Al-Anon was founded by Lois W. and Anne B. (editor's note ... yes, this article is on singleness of purpose, but please allow historic recognition of our sister organization for our families and friends).

## 1958

["Problems Other Than Alcohol"](#) pamphlet is published in the Grapevine.

Bill W.'s thoughts on the status of those addicted to drugs and other substances within A.A. are as timely as when they appeared in a 1958 Grapevine.

Timeline, continued

## 1985

Approval of the basic text for Narcotics Anonymous (founded in 1952 in LA). Timeline: <https://www.na.org/?ID=timeline-video>

Later, their fellowship recognized the need for singleness of purpose and added clarity and definitive suggestions to their members:

"Some thoughts regarding our relationship to Alcoholics Anonymous"

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in November 1985 in response to the needs of the fellowship. This bulletin was revised during the 1995-1996 conference year. Read the full bulletin here: <https://na.org/?ID=bulletins-bull13-r>

Excepts follow: When our members identify as "addicts and alcoholics" or talk about "sobriety" and living "clean and sober," the clarity of the NA message is blurred.

The focus of A.A. is on the alcoholic, and we ought to respect that fellowship's perfect right to adhere to its own traditions and protect its focus. If we cannot use language consistent with that, we ought not go to their meetings and undermine that atmosphere. In the same way, we NA members ought to respect our own primary purpose and identify ourselves at NA meetings simply as addicts, and share in a way that keeps our message clear.

## 1987

[Primary Purpose Card](#) is approved for use at open and closed meetings of A.A. by the 1987 Convention.

A.A.'s Primary Purpose is to carry its message of hope to the suffering alcoholic and our Singleness of Purpose is the cornerstone of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Considered by many as another response the ongoing attempts by outside interests to divert A.A. for their own uses (money, property, and prestige) and to bring the focus of our meetings back to the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

## 2002

Dr. George Vaillant, Non-alcoholic Trustee publishes "Singleness of Purpose" Article in the A.A. publication Newsletter for Professionals.

## Pin these dates:

### Assemblies

#### Who attends:

GSRs, DCMs, Area Standing Committee Chairs, Area Officers & Intergroup Chairs

### Committee Meetings

#### Who attends:

DCMs, Area Standing Committee Chairs, Area Officers & Intergroup Chairs

## 2023

### November Committee Meeting

Saturday, November 4th, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
Hosted by District 17, Waianae, Oahu

## 2024

### Inventory Assembly

January 20 & 21, 2024

District #7 Hilo /Hamakua, Big Island

### February Committee Meeting

February 24, 2024

District #9, Central North Shore, Oahu

### Inform The Delegate Assembly

April 6-7, 2024

District #2 Honolulu, Oahu

*Dates TBD on the following events:*

### May Committee Meeting

District #5, Maui No Ka Oi

### August Budget Assembly

District #4, Windward, Oahu

### Optional October Committee Meeting

District #6, Kauai

### November Election Assembly

District #1, Diamond Head, Oahu

## 2002, continued

"Singleness of purpose" is essential to the effective treatment of alcoholism. The reason for such exaggerated focus is to overcome denial. The denial associated with alcoholism is cunning, baffling, and powerful and affects the patient, helper, and the community. Unless alcoholism is kept relentlessly in the foreground, other issues will usurp everybody's attention.

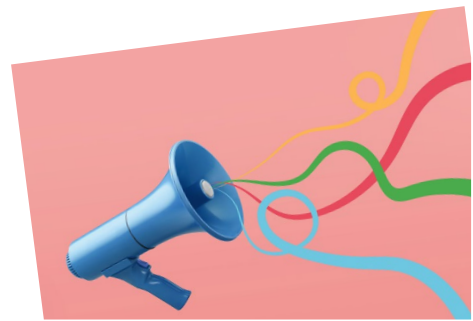
**VISIT THE [ONLINE VERSION](#) TO HAVE IN-DEPTH DETAILS VIA THE FOLLOWING LINKS:**

- [1999 Workshop - Singleness of Purpose](#)
- [Pamphlet The AA Group](#)
- [Bill W. writes the twelve traditions, and they are first published in the newly establish Grapevine](#)
- [Pamphlet Problems Other than Alcohol published by Bill. First published in the Grapevine](#)
- [Primary Purpose statement card for open and closed meetings approved at 1987 International Convention.](#)
- [Singleness of Purpose article published in GSO's Newsletter for Professionals](#)
- <https://www.aa.org/aa-timeline>

**YOU HAVE A VOICE!**

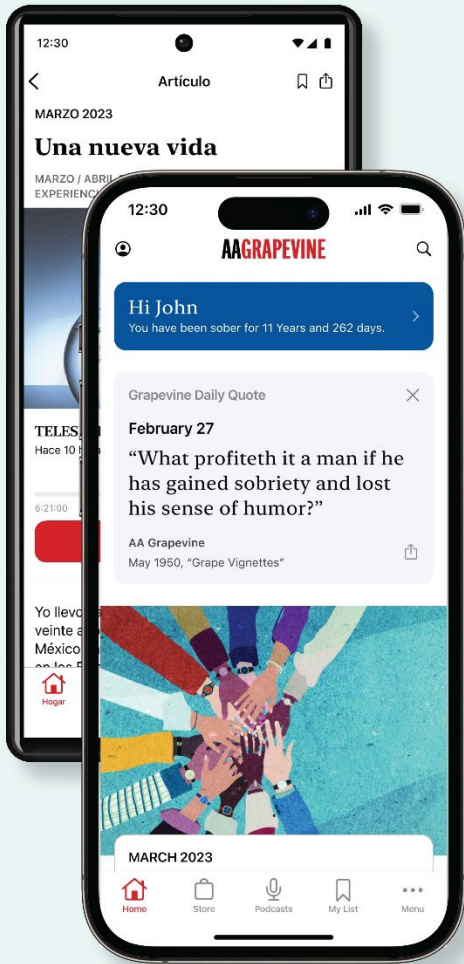
**Give us your thoughts on:**

- **FUTURE TOPICS?**
- **WANT TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE?**
- **IDEAS FOR FUN SECTIONS?**
- **DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE ONLINE MEETING?**
- **HOW ABOUT A SENTENCE THAT YOU HEARD IN A MEETING THAT YOU FOUND PROFOUND IN YOUR JOURNEY?** ("Heard in a meeting")



Please let us hear ideas that you would like to explore in future issues of the Mynah Bird!  
Write to: [mynahbird@area17.org](mailto:mynahbird@area17.org)





**COMING  
SEPTEMBER 2023!**

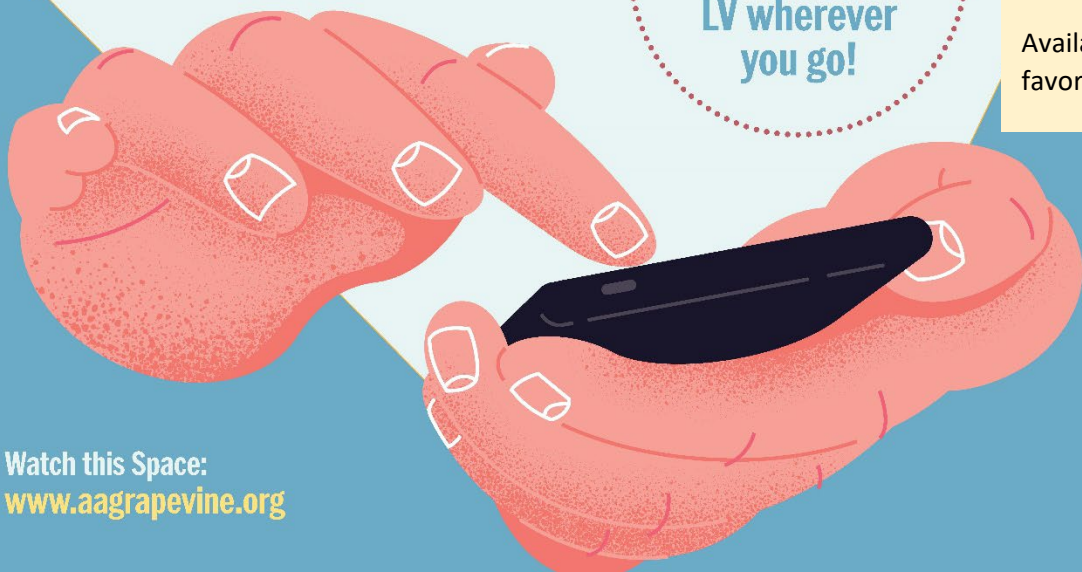
# THE NEW GRAPEVINE & LA VIÑA APPS!

- Read or listen to every issue
- Search our vast GV/LV Archives
- Keep track of your sobriety and spiritual practices
- Share your thoughts on articles
- Share AA stories and area events with friends
- Find meetings and connect to aa.org

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





**REMINDER:**  
 Send out the MYNAH BIRD's  
 QR code (see pg. 1)  
 for each issue to your home  
 groups.

**This month's Acronym Fun ... with the letters E & F!**

EDI not DIE = Easy Does It not Does It Easy...

EGO = Easing God Out...

EGO = Edging God Out...

ESH = Experience Strength Hope

FAILURE = Fearful, Arrogant, Insecure, Lonely, Uncertain, Resentful, Empty...

FAITH = Fear Ain't In This House...

FAITH = Facing An Inner Truth Heals...

FAITH = For An Instant Trust Him...

FAITH = Fantastic Adventure In Trusting Him...

FAITH = Fear And Insecurity? Trust Him!...

FAITH = For All I Trust Him

FAITH = Forget Answers Instead Trust Him

FAITH = Forwarding All Issues To Him/Heaven

FAITH = Found Always In Trusting Him

FAITH = Further/Fantastic Adventure In Trusting Him

FAMILY = Father And Mother I Love You...

**FEAR** = Forgetting Everything's All Right ... Frustration Ego Anger Resentment ... Frantic Efforts at Avoiding Responsibilities ... Fear/Failure Expressed Allows Relief **FEAR** = Failure Expected And Received... **FEAR** = False Evidence Appearing Real... **FEAR** = Feelings expressed Allows Relief... **FEAR** = Feelings Every Alcoholic Rejects...

**FEAR** = Fighting Ego Against Reality... **FEAR** = Forget Everything And Run... **FEAR** = F\*\*k Everything And Run!...

**FEAR** = Face Everything And Recover!... **FEAR** = Forgetting Everything's All Right... **FEAR** = Frantic Effort to Appear Real... **FEAR** = Frantic Efforts to Appear Recovered...

FINE = Faithful, Involved, Knowledgeable and Experienced...

FINE = Feeling Insecure, Numb and Empty...

FINE = Frantic, Insane, Nuts and Egotistical...

FINE = Freaked out, Insecure, Neurotic and Emotional...

FINE = Feeling Insecure Neurotic & Emotional...

FINE = Frustrated, Insecure, Neurotic & Emotional...

FINE = F-cked, Insecure, Neurotic & Emotional...

FREE = Fortunately Recovery Enhances Everything

FOG = Fear of God...

FROG = Fully/Forever Relying On God

Our FAVORITE Acronym:  
**ALOHA ...**  
**A Lot Of Happy Alcoholics!**