



D5 AA  
FARGO

MAY 2025

# DAKOTA LANTERN

District 5 Alcoholics Anonymous

## Do The Action, and Let God Do the Rest

When I first came into the program, I heard people say “Suit up and show up,” “Get out of the driver seat,” and “Do the next right thing.” To me this means I do the actions and let God do the rest. It is of course easier said than done.

I first sobered up when I was 20 years old and practiced this to the best of my ability.

When I hit 5-7 years of sobriety I started to take control back more and more. I resisted being fully honest to myself and the people around me. I had relapsed at 7 years and had seen what my pride can do when it was in control. Outwardly my life seemed okay. I was working 64 hours a week at a good job, attending nursing school full time and was active in AA. It is important to note I was not emotionally or mentally always present in meetings at that time. Emotionally and spiritually, I was struggling and did not want to live like this.

I found myself humbled and willing to be honest and try this “Give it to God” thing again. I started to be honest with my sponsor and friends in AA. I did another 4th and 5th step. I started to find peace—

## Service Sunday

### Institutions Committee

3rd Sunday of the Month at 2:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(basement)

### Public Information / CPC Committee

3rd Sunday of the Month at 2:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(2nd Floor)

### Group Activities Committee

3rd Sunday of the Month at 2:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(2nd Floor)

### District 5

3rd Sunday of the Month at 3:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(3rd Floor)

**CAMP AARAMA!!!**

**MAY 23-26**

**LAKE BRONSON STATE PARK**

**GALILEE BIBLE CAMP—NO REGISTRATION**

**7TH TRADITION FIRST COME FIRST SERVE**

Have an article you  
would like to submit?



701-306-9101 (Text First)  
[editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:editor@ndd5aa.org)



1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103

again. I began each day with the thought “I give the day to my higher power whether I understand my higher power or not. I’ll just try it for today.” The day would not go so bad, and I would do it again and then again.

After a year of sobriety, I looked back and saw what can happen when I practice letting go and focus on doing the next right action. I had found not only serenity and peace in my life but also a purpose outside of AA.

I graduated from nursing school during that first year. I had wanted to work in the hospital and never a nursing home. I applied for an inpatient position at a local hospital and did not get it. A fellow student nurse got it instead. I was disappointed and felt the rejection. I did the next right action and sent out other applications including to a nursing home I had visited as a student. I got the job at the nursing home the day I applied. The first day on the job I knew I was in the right place. I loved the residents and was in my element. This is a perfect example of getting out of my own way and letting God direct me.

I worked in that job for almost 8 years and learned so much. At the end of my time working there I started to feel restless and felt a push to go somewhere else. I discussed this feeling with my sponsor and prayed about it. I did the next right action and sent out applications. I got a job at a clinic (I was never going to work in a-



clinic) and have been there for ten years. I have had three different bosses during this time, and each have said this is such a great fit for you.

I had let go and let my higher power direct me where to go. I am excited to see where else God will lead me. —*Holly M.*

## A Positive Response to the Plain Language Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

When I first heard about the Plain Language Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, I was intrigued. The original Big Book, published in 1939, is the cornerstone of our A program, but its language can be challenging for many. The idea of a version written in simpler, more accessible language seemed like a promising way to reach more people struggling with alcoholism. —→

Have an article you  
would like to submit?



[701-306-9101 \(Text First\)](tel:701-306-9101)  
[editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:editor@ndd5aa.org)



1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103

# HELP WANTED

## -Group Events/Calendar Team

WE'RE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO KEEP OUR FELLOWSHIP CONNECTED AND THRIVING. IF YOU ENJOY ORGANIZING DETAILS OR BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER, WE HAVE A PLACE FOR YOU!

### -Calendar Coordinator

LOVE KEEPING THINGS ORGANIZED? WE NEED SOMEONE TO HELP MAINTAIN THE DISTRICT 5 CALENDAR AND HELP COMMUNICATE WITH LOCAL GROUPS TO KEEP EVERYONE INFORMED ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS. THIS ROLE ENSURES THAT MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS, AND GATHERINGS ARE WELL-COORDINATED AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.

### -Event & Activities Volunteers

WANT TO BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER? HELP PLAN AND ORGANIZE DISTRICT 5 EVENTS!

- ANNUAL EVENTS: THE SOUP & SPEAKER WORKSHOP (WINTER) AND THE FELLOWSHIP HARVEST FESTIVAL (OCTOBER) ARE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE.
- 2026 STATE ROUND-UP & FALL ASSEMBLY (FARGO): WE NEED A STRONG TEAM TO HELP HOST THIS MAJOR STATEWIDE EVENT!

**No experience? No problem! If you're willing, we'll support you. Step into service and make a difference!**



**Interested? Reach out today! [Events@ndd5aa.org](mailto:Events@ndd5aa.org)**

At the first meeting to discuss the Plain Language Big Book, I noticed a mix of reactions. Some members were enthusiastic, seeing it as a valuable tool to help newcomers understand the Twelve Steps and the principles of AA. Others were skeptical, worried that simplifying the language might dilute the powerful message of the original text. Despite these differing views, I found myself feeling optimistic about the potential of this new version.

### Why the Plain Language Big Book Was Developed?

The development of the Plain Language Big Book was driven by a need to make the AA program more accessible. Over the years, many members expressed difficulties in understanding the original Big Book due to its dated language and complex vocabulary. The General Service Conference (GSC) recognized this issue and, in 2021, advised that a plain language

version be created. The goal was to ensure that the lifesaving message of AA could be easily understood by all, regardless of their reading ability or familiarity with the language used in the original text.

The process of creating the Plain Language Big Book involved extensive collaboration between AA members and publishing professionals. The final draft was reviewed and approved by substantial unanimity at the 74th GSC in April 2024. This new version is not intended to replace our original Big Book but to serve as a companion piece, helping readers grasp the core concepts and spiritual message more easily.



Have an article you would like to submit?



701-306-9101 (Text First)  
[editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:editor@ndd5aa.org)



1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103

My Positive Response

As I began reading the Plain Language Big Book, I was struck by how much more approachable the text felt. The simplified language made the principles of AA clearer and more relatable. I could see how this version would be particularly beneficial for newcomers who might feel overwhelmed by the original text. The essence of the message remained intact, but it was presented in a way that was easier to digest.

During the meeting, some members voiced concerns that the Plain Language Big Book might undermine the integrity of the original text. They feared that simplifying the language could lead to misinterpretations or a loss of the depth and richness that the original Big Book offers. While I understood these concerns, I felt that the benefits outweighed the potential drawbacks. The Plain Language Big Book has the potential to reach individuals who might otherwise struggle to connect with the AA program.

One of the most compelling arguments in favor of the Plain Language Big Book is its ability to bridge the gap for those with reading difficulties or limited literacy skills. In today’s diverse society, it’s crucial to provide resources that are accessible to everyone. The Plain Language Big Book addresses this need by offering a version of the AA program that is easier to understand, without compromising the core message.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my response to the Plain Language Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous has been overwhelmingly positive. While there are valid concerns about maintaining the integrity of the original text, I believe that the benefits of making the AA program more accessible far outweigh these concerns. The Plain Language Big Book is a valuable tool that can help more people find their path to recovery.

20TH ANNUAL MENS

AA WEEKEND

AUGUST

8,9,10TH



Registration: \$130

-Includes lodging, meals, activities,  
-Rope's course (\$15) Fishing (extra)

*Fellowship, Recovery, Brotherhood Unity*

**Wilderness Boy Scout Camp**

**2998<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Journey Trail, Park**

**Rapids, MN 56470**

Have an article you would like to submit?

 [701-306-9101 \(Text First\).  
editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:701-306-9101 (Text First).editor@ndd5aa.org)

 1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103



The development of this version was a thoughtful and collaborative process, aimed at ensuring that the lifesaving message of AA can be understood by all. As we continue to support and welcome newcomers into the AA community, the Plain Language Big Book will undoubtedly play a crucial role in helping individuals connect with our program and begin their journey towards sobriety. *–Anonymous*

## **THE FIRST ROUNDUP**

HI EVERYONE, MY NAME IS DUSTIN AND I AM AN ALCOHOLIC. SINCE SOBERING UP AGAIN A YEAR AGO, I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO MANY AMAZING EXPERIENCES AND MET TOO MANY GREAT PEOPLE TO COUNT. I WANT TO SHARE ONE IN PARTICULAR THAT STANDS OUT AS MORE MEMORABLE THAN SOME OF THE OTHERS. THIS STORY IS ABOUT THE FIRST ROUNDUP THAT I'VE BEEN ON, WITH A GROUP OF GUYS THAT I NOW CONSIDER TO BE VERY CLOSE FRIENDS.

IT WAS THE FALL OF 2023, AND AFTER A FEW RELAPSES THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER, I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO GET MORE THAN 30 DAYS OF SOBRIETY. I WAS FIRST ASKED ABOUT THE ROUNDUP LATE SUMMER BY MY SPONSOR, AND AT THAT TIME I WAS HESITANTLY SAYING YES. AS TIME GOT CLOSER TO THE ROUNDUP, I HAD FINALLY COMMITTED TO GOING, BUT WAS STILL NERVOUS. I WAS GOING WITH A GROUP OF GUYS THAT WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN MY EARLY SOBRIETY AND I CONSIDERED SOME OF MY EARLY FRIENDS SINCE COMING BACK TO THE PROGRAM, BUT I WAS STILL VERY NERVOUS. I KNEW I ENJOYED THE COMPANY OF THE PEOPLE I WAS GOING WITH, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW IF I WOULD ENJOY SPENDING THAT MUCH TIME WITH THEM. WHAT WAS I GOING TO DO WHEN I NEEDED "ME" TIME?

WELL, ON THE CAR RIDE OUT, I WAS QUICKLY ASSURED THAT THIS WEEKEND WAS GOING TO BE HARD TO FORGET. WE TALKED AA THE ENTIRE

WAY OUT, BUT IN A WAY THAT WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU WOULD HEAR AT A MEETING. I COULDN'T TELL YOU EXACTLY WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT, BUT I REMEMBER WE LAUGHED FROM THE TIME WE LEFT FARGO, FARGO, TO THE TIME WE GOT TO BISMARCK. ONCE WE WERE AT THE ROUNDUP, I REMEMBER THE SPEAKERS DID A TREMENDOUS JOB. I AM A BIG NOTE TAKER WHEN LISTENING TO PEOPLE SHARE, AND I TOOK MORE NOTES OVER THE ROUNDUP THAN POSSIBLY THE REST OF MY SOBRIETY COMBINED. NOT JUST THE SPEAKERS, BUT THE FELLOWSHIP THAT I EXPERIENCED WAS UNLIKE ANYTHING I HAD EXPERIENCED IN YEARS.

I REMEMBER WE WENT TO MCDONALDS FOR LATE NIGHT DINNER AND HAD SO MUCH FUN WITH—→

## **Plain Language Big Book Study**

**Olivet Lutheran Church**

**Thursday April 3rd**

**Will last about 3 months**

**Questions contact Jim S. at 7013069101**



**Talk to Lynn R to  
get a Plain  
Language Big  
Book!**

Have an article you  
would like to submit?



**701-306-9101 (Text First)**  
[editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:editor@ndd5aa.org)



**1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103**

EVERYONE. PRO TIP, USE THE APP AND GET YOUR FOOD BEFORE EVERYONE ELSE! WE STAYED UP WAY PAST MY BEDTIME AND WERE UP AT 8:00 AM READY FOR THE NEXT DAY. THE NEXT NIGHT, WE ENDED UP AT BUFFALO WILD WINGS AND WERE UP UNTIL ABOUT 2:00 AM. AND I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD BE UP THAT LATE WITHOUT DRINKING, LET ALONE ENJOYING MYSELF. WE WON'T TALK ABOUT THE GAS THAT SOME PEOPLE HAD THE NEXT DAY THOUGH.

I KNEW THAT I NEEDED ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS BECAUSE OF MY PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN THE PROGRAM, BUT THIS WAS THE TRIP THAT REALLY MADE ME WANT ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. ONE THING THAT REALLY MADE ME REALIZE HOW SPECIAL THIS TRIP WAS, WAS A COMMENT THAT I HEARD FROM SOMEONE WITH MORE SOBRIETY THAN ME. STATING THAT THEY HAD NEVER HAD SO MUCH FUN AT A ROUNDUP/STAT ASSEMBLY. KNOWING THAT THEY HAD BEEN TO SEVERAL ROUNDUPS IN THE PAST AND HEARING THIS COMMENT MADE ME APPRECIATE THE TRIP THAT MUCH MORE.

SO, TO SUM THINGS UP, IF YOU ARE HESITANT ABOUT SPENDING A WEEKEND WITH SOME PEOPLE IN AA, GIVE IT A TRY. GET A GROUP OF PEOPLE TOGETHER AND SPEND A WEEKEND AT A ROUND UP. IF IT IS HALF AS AMAZING AS THIS WEEKEND WAS FOR ME, YOU WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED. IF YOU ARE NEWER IN THE PROGRAM, EVEN IF YOU ARE UNCOMFORTABLE DOING THIS, STAY OPEN MINDED, WILLING, AND PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE. YOU WON'T REGRET IT. —*Dustin A.*

## The Fix

Early on in sobriety, I found many who wanted to help by offering suggestions.

Who doesn't like a suggestion once in a while?

Although I heard the suggestions and knew they were offered in good faith, I probably wasn't going to implement them. It wasn't that I immediately thought I knew better. I think, deep down, I wanted to experience the result of doing what I wanted to do rather than do something suggested. This action or non-action often does not end well. Then again, I was the only one I could blame for the failure and/or take credit for the positives.

Enough of that.

What I really found more than anything was I wanted someone to listen well and not offer suggestions period. The minute someone says, "You Should", I'm out.

So, listening well to each other can be mutually beneficial. The listener gets to practice patience and the other gains trust.

Over the years I find I don't want to be fixed. I just want someone to genuinely listen.

—*Dan M*



LINK TO  
LOCAL FARGO  
AA WEBSITE  
(DISTRICT 5)



LINK TO STATE  
OF NORTH  
DAKOTA AA  
WEBSITE  
(AREA 52)



LINK TO  
NATIONAL  
AA WEBSITE  
(AA.ORG)

Have an article you  
would like to submit?



701-306-9101 (Text First)  
[editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:editor@ndd5aa.org)



1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103



## A Lazy Alcoholic's Life Hack: Choosing a Homegroup

I am fundamentally lazy. They describe me perfectly in the 12 x 12, "with genuine alarm at the prospect of work, we stay lazy" (p. 49). I want things to magically come to me—happiness, relationships, a career, a clean house, etc. What if I work hard but still fail, or things don't turn out how I want? I'd rather not bother. I could procrastinate to death (literally), so I had to learn ways to make the prospect of recovery work less alarming.

My first homegroup drilled in our heads that you only miss your homegroup if you're dead. I took it to heart and came back every week—mostly because I didn't have anything better to do. Life gradually became easier as I had regular contact with other alcoholics. Meetings turned into something I just did, not something I chose to do each week. It went from optional to an automatic part of my routine, like taking a shower or brushing my teeth.

Despite my laziness, I do some things without a fuss. I don't ponder if my teeth feel like they need brushing or which brand of toothpaste to use—I brush without thinking using Colgate. It's simply automatic. I attend meetings like that. I selected a homegroup and I go weekly. I don't need to waste time or effort deciding whether I feel like I need a meeting each Thursday. Regardless of how I feel, I always need meetings.

I've changed homegroups several times in sobriety. My original homegroup started at 8pm with fellowship afterwards. That got too late for this old lady, so I found an earlier one. Currently, I'm a member of a women's group. I regularly attend other meetings as well, but my homegroup is not optional. It doesn't matter if I use Colgate or Crest as long as I use toothpaste, and it doesn't matter which meeting I join, as long as I have a homegroup.

I schedule my life around my homegroup, although I've become slightly less militant. I stay home if I'm sick, and sometimes I'm out of town. But if I miss my meeting, people notice.


If circumstances change, I might need to switch homegroups again. But I will always have one, and I won't stop going to my current homegroup until I find a new one. I formed the habit, and don't want to risk losing it. I've heard people who came back to AA after 'floating out the top.' My alcoholic brain could concoct infinite reasons to skip and get sick again. It's too cold (or hot or nice), I outgrew AA, someone is irritating me, I have important things to do, etc. But I only have a daily reprieve, so I treat meetings like brushing my teeth.

Life is easier when the essentials of my recovery are automatic. I'm grateful they drilled homegroup attendance into my thick head. It takes some work, but the prospect is much less alarming if I don't have to bother with the decision-making part of it. **—Laura S.**

## **Saturday Morning Men's Picnic/Fish Fry**

**August 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 Trollwood park- 3664 Elm St. N. Fargo Tickets: \$10 and sell out fast!**

Have an article you  
would like to submit?

 [701-306-9101 \(Text First\).  
editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:701-306-9101 (Text First).editor@ndd5aa.org)

 1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103

**Concept 4:**

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

What this allows is for non trustee members to have a vote because they sit on a standing committee having been appointed by the General Service Board due to their experience. Staff members of the General Service Office act as secretaries for the standing committee so due to their participation they as well have a vote in AA matters at the conference. This may seem to be contrary to the idea that only delegates should be voting at the conference because they directly represent the fellowship. But, these participants spend many hours discussing the conference agenda items in their committees with the trustees who have constant contact with delegates. The trustees can reflect the voice of the fellowship even though their primary duty is to AAWS as a corporation.

This concept also applies to the Areas, Districts and groups. At the area level, area officers and committee members have the right to participate in the voting process as well in addition to the DCM's representing their respective districts. These officers and committee chairs have most likely sat at the district table in one form or another, so having their experience along with the current DCM's helps to ensure that when a motion is passed, that all sides are taken into account.

In my opinion, this right of participation is most important for the group level. Each group member should be involved in the groups steering committee or group conscience meeting. There are no second class citizens in the fellowship and everyone has the right to be heard during discussions. While, yes, some people have less experience than others in the fellowship due to being newer than others, it doesn't take away whatever life experience they have had prior to coming to the fellowship. We don't know what

they have been involved with during their lifetime and while not always, some of those experiences may have great benefit to the discussion. And being they can contribute to the discussion, they should also have the right to vote their conscience as well.

**Tradition 5: (Long Form)**

"Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose- that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg 193).

Tradition 5, over time, has been reduced to one of the common phrases we hear in Alcoholics Anonymous; 'singleness of purpose'. The theme being, we must always focus our efforts on alcoholism; carrying the A.A. message to those who suffer from alcoholism. This offers a significant cautionary measure to Tradition 4, which sets forth the autonomy of our A.A. groups.

Yes, the A.A. groups and their members are afforded immense latitude. However, Tradition 5 and our 'singleness of purpose' provides a firm parameter for groups to operate freely within.

Tradition 5 allows Alcoholics Anonymous to continue to be Alcoholics Anonymous. If unity is our guiding light principle, our singleness of purpose is the lighthouse that allows the light to guide us into the future. Its significance is two-fold: our common suffering, an alcoholic's ability to help another alcoholic as others are unable, and the paradoxical nature of keeping what we have by giving it away. The power of identification lies within our singleness of purpose. As A.A. members we are uniquely qualified to identify ourselves and share recovery with the newcomers and our fellow-

Have an article you  
would like to submit?



701-306-9101 (Text First)  
[editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:editor@ndd5aa.org)



1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103



# YOUR announcement HERE!!

**HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT THE COMMUNITY TO  
HEAR ABOUT? SUBMIT YOUR FLYER TO THE  
INFORMATION DOWN BELOW!**

sufferers; provided of course we have found recovery ourselves. Additionally we find, and have heard countless times, the only way we can keep what we have, is to give it away; to pass it on to our fellow sufferers or newcomers.

Remember the substance of all of our Traditions were borne out of the experience, and transgressions, of those who came before us. The pioneers of A.A. paved the way for us so we need not suffer, if we care to act in accordance with their experience. "Shoemaker, stick to thy last!...better to do one thing extremely well than many badly." (Twelve Steps and Twelve

Traditions, pg 151). Throughout the years we have attempted to be many things to many people and, in the end, found we must maintain our singleness of purpose; for the good of the whole, and for the individual. "A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg 131).

For additional support, check out A.A. Grapevine Inc, "Traditions Checklist"  
[https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/smf-131\\_en.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/smf-131_en.pdf)

Excerpts from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions reprinted with permission from A.A.W.S.



CHRIS ALLISON  
TOONHOLE.COM

Have an article you  
would like to submit?



701-306-9101 (Text First)  
[editor@ndd5aa.org](mailto:editor@ndd5aa.org)



1112 3rd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103