

# THE SOBRIETY VARIETY

SEPTEMBER 2014

VOLUME 14: ISSUE 9

HILL COUNTRY INTERGROUP

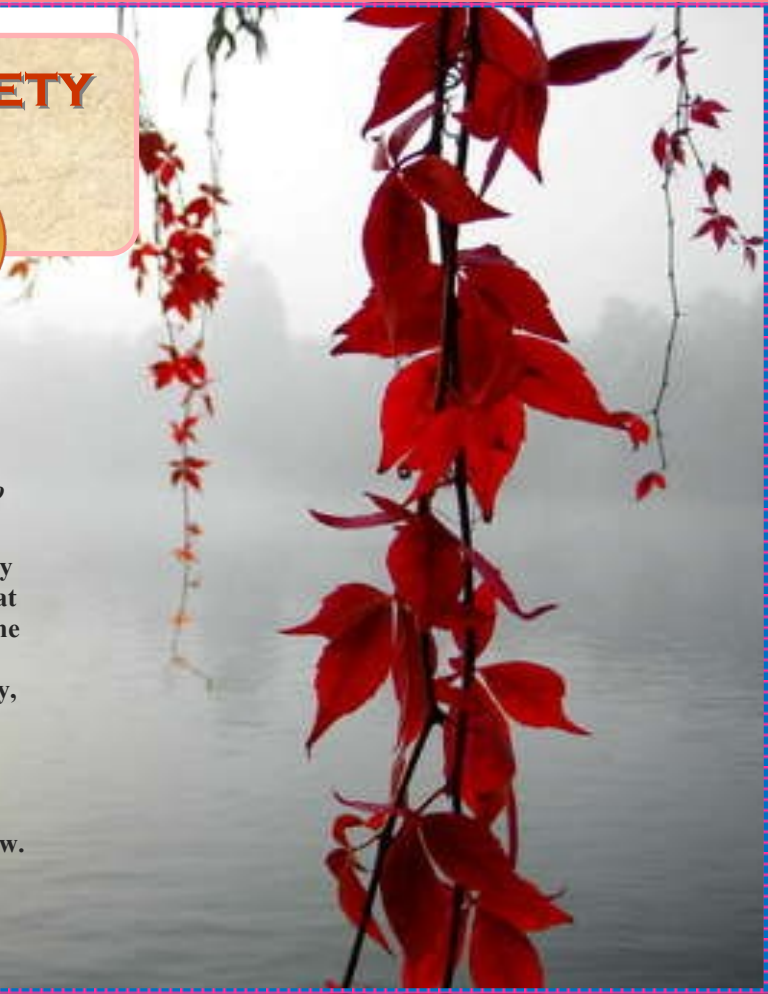


## WILLINGNESS TO GROW

from Daily Reflections

*“If more gifts are to be received, our awakening has to go on.” ~ As Bill sees it, p.8*

Sobriety fills the painful “hole in the soul” that my alcoholism created. Often I feel so physically well that I believe my work is done. However, joy is not just the absence of pain; it is the gift of continued spiritual awakening. Joy comes from ongoing and active study, as well as application of the principles of recovery in my every day life, and from sharing that experience with others. My Higher Power presents many opportunities for deeper spiritual awakening. I need only to bring into my recovery the willingness to grow. Today I am ready to grow.



## 2015 A.A. International Convention



The 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held **July 2-5, 2015** in **Atlanta, Georgia** with the theme **“80 Years – Happy, Joyous and Free.”**

A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 80th year with Big Meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Georgia Dome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the Georgia World Congress Center and local hotels.

\*Registration opened on September 3, 2014. Go to [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) to register online. Registration brochures that include the registration form have also been mailed to G.S.R.s, Central Offices/Intergroups and International G.S.O.s/Central Offices/Intergroups.

\*Preregistration is available until May 12, 2015, and the preregistration fee is \$100.

\*After May 12, you may register on-site. The on-site registration fee is \$110. On-site registration will be set up in the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta and will open on Wednesday morning, July 1, 2015.

\*Payments from travel agencies to register groups or individuals will not be accepted.

\*The Convention app will be available for download in May 2015.

\*To make the process as fair as possible, all housing requests will be processed through the official Housing Bureau.

## The Ninth Tradition

*“A.A., as such, ought never be organized but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”*

Tradition Nine is astonishing. In the past I thought everything had been so well organized that I almost died from it! I was frightened to find that I needed to be in a group that wasn't organized. But in AA I am free to be myself as I find myself, and here is another whisper towards humility: I can be on service boards, committees, and can be a trusted servant who is directly responsible to you, (not for you) my fellow AA's. The A.A. Traditions are the greatest.

- Anonymus

**To thine own self be true**

## PLEASE NOTE

As you can probably tell, the Hill Country Intergroup Newsletter is going through some changes. Please understand that we are making room to grow and could use your help and patience as we move forward with this publication. Keep your eyes open for some new material and new articles as well as a revamping of some familiar formats. Thank you for your understanding and patience. ~ HCIA

## As Bill Sees It

For most of us, the first years of A.A. are something like a Honeymoon. There is a new and potent reason to stay alive, joyful activity aplenty. For a time, we are diverted from the main life problems. That is all to the good.

"But when the "Honeymoon" has worn off, we are obliged to take our lumps, like other people. This is where the testing starts. Maybe the group has pushed us onto the side lines. Maybe difficulties have intensified at home, or in the world outside. Then the old behavior patterns reappear. How well we recognize and deal with them reveals the extent of our progress.

\*\*\*\*\*

*The wise have always known that no one can make much of his life until self-searching becomes a regular habit, until he is able to admit and accept what he finds, and until he patiently and persistently tries to correct what is wrong.*

pg. 216

## Future Local and Worldwide Events

- **9th ANNUAL SENIORS IN SOBRIETY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:** October 2 - 5 | Registration \$50.00 AA with Al-Anon participation.

@ Embassy Suites by Hilton  
2577 W. Greenway Rd. (Just off I-17), Phoenix, AZ 85023

For more information: [www.seniorsinsobriety.org](http://www.seniorsinsobriety.org)

- **30th ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP IN THE PINES:**

October 3-5 @ River Bend Park,  
Smithville, Texas

For more information: <http://www.franlan.com/Fellowship/>

- **SPIRIT OF THE PINES:** October 17-19

@ Camp Olympia on Lake Livingston, Texas.

For more information: <http://www.spiritofthepines.org/>

- **A RECOVERY CONFERENCE @ SEA:** November 1-8

7 day cruise vacation from Houston to: Cozumel, Belize, and Banana Coast Honduras. Includes: Meetings, workshops, 'In This Life' private tours, Dining, Dancing and entertainment on the Norwegian Cruise Lines 'Norwegian Jewel'

For more information, contact:

Trips@inthislife.com or 805.927.6910 or 800.531.7578  
<http://travelsober.com/holiday/a-sail-of-all-sails/>

- **48th ANNUAL LAS VEGAS ROUND UP:**

Turkey day Weekend!

November 27-30 @ Riviera Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, NV  
Limited number of rooms available at \$49/night.

To reserve a room please contact the hotel directly at 1-800-634-6753 and mention Las Vegas Roundup, code SLVRU14

Pre-Registration: \$35

For more information: <http://www.lasvegasroundup.org/>

- **SOBER SISTERS WEEKEND TO BAHAMAS CRUISE**

Presented by *Gratitude Cruises* January 23-26, 2015

Three night Bahamas Cruise on a Royal Caribbean vessel.

Starts in Port Canaveral, Fl. and travels to Nassau, Bahama and Coco Cay, Bahamas. Returns to Port Canaveral, Fl. On the 26th

For more information: <http://www.sobercelebrations.com/>

- **SOBER ADVENTURE TO INDIA: March 7-19, 2015**

Land trip, fine hotels and elephant safari. 561-702-2312

For information: <http://www.sobercelebrations.com/>



# SWRAASA 2014



## HOSTED BY SOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA 68

Omni Corpus Christi Hotel

October 10-12

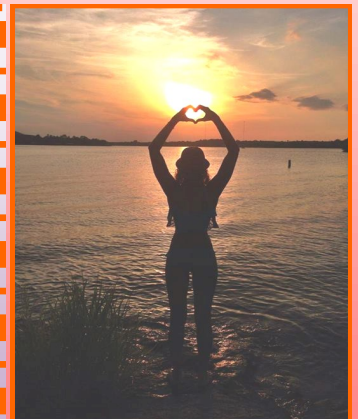
900 North Shoreline Blvd.

Corpus Christi, Texas 78401

Ph: (361) 887-1600, Fax: (361) 887-6715

Registration Code: 14500811855

for more information: [swraasa@aa-swta.org](mailto:swraasa@aa-swta.org).





# Sober In The City the interviews: *No Cocktails For Me*

By C.S. Willow - Sobriety Year: 2006

The longer I stay sober the more I crave emotional sobriety, some understanding of it. Not in terms of whether I feel “good” or “bad” but more about my ability to feel my feelings without any one of them defining who I am. I know it is not always about being “happy, joyous and free.” If it is ...I’m screwed. What I have found so far is that I have to be in the right here, right now. That I have to be honest with another sober member of alcoholics anonymous to grow as a human being. I had the pleasure of interviewing one of those members.

Sobriety year: 1992  
Do you have a sponsor? Yes  
Do you sponsor? Yes  
Do you have a home group? Yes

### CS: Thinking about your first fourth step and your fourth step now what has changed and what has stayed the same?

Our guest shared that she was looking for the words that can be of maximum service to others. Repeating the question to herself, “How have my inventories changed?” (Before answering she uttered a prayer and then spoke her truth.)

**1992:** When I first got sober, my inventory was a hoarder who just needed to have someone come in and shovel and shovel and shovel the shit out. What’s interesting is that the things on my inventory then are so far from who I am now. I had to get that layer off first to be able to deal with my growth or handicaps. These handicaps are not always glaring and are covered up by my grosser handicaps. It was a lifetime of wreckage that had to be shoveled. It was a big overhaul. Then there was a period where, truthfully I got a little like “yeah, yeah...selfish, yeah....self seeking.” This type of inventory did not serve me. It was a period of taking the process for granted and thinking just let me write it down because I know it is true but then not using the inventory to grow as much as I can. Frankly, I got off the beam. I wasn’t doing the inventory to maximize it’s potential to make a difference for me. It was enough to keep me sober and in the conversation. It was like brushing your teeth but not brushing deep enough or concentrating on the angle of the brush to make sure you got in a good tooth brushing.

The one thing that has never changed is that it is always out of the book. The most recent inventory I did was no bullshit. If you really answer the questions in the book like your life depends on it, the insidiousness (definition of: operating or proceeding in an inconspicuous or seemingly harmless way but actually with grave effect) of the disease, the impact of the defects of character, which are not as glaring but just as gross have to be addressed. I have started telling the truth on a deeper and deeper level by asking myself, “How am I blocking myself off from the spirit? How am I shutting god out?” The damage now is not so blatant. It is mostly affecting me because I am only telling myself the lies.

**(I asked her for an example)** I wasn’t trustworthy with your spouse. My behavior was unpredictable and dramatic because I needed a lot of attention. I would be having a great time with you and then I would behave differently because I needed major

attention due to my twisted emotional state. Today my fear based, self-centered, manipulative tendency has me appearing really, really, really nice to you. This new behavior is just as spiritually damaging and causes me to be more far removed spiritually. Now I am manipulating my life more than damaging the lives of other people directly. In my inventory today, I can say I’m pretending to be kind, loving, happy or whatever when, in fact, I am terrified of just saying “I don’t like you.” My disease is more sneaky now so I have to be more skilled at catching my subtleties.

### CS: “What experiences do you want to share with someone who is doing the 4th and 5th step for the first time or for someone with some sober time who knows they need to do another 4th and 5th step?”

**1992:** If you can’t tell the person you are going to do the 5th step with your truth then change the person you are working with. For me when I was new it didn’t matter who I did my first inventory with because I had to get those lifetime of layers removed first to get to where I am today. In my experience with doing more 4th and 5th step, it is so important for me to share the truth. I don’t mean sharing about secrets, but it is very important for me to work with someone who is not going to let me skate over stuff. I’m not saying it is their responsibility to get me to tell my truth, but I have to work with someone who lovingly helps me dig in and encourages me to dig more to find the stuff that is running my life. I have found that if I am struggling, then some defect is at play. I need to be working with someone to help me shovel the shit. I need someone who is going to listen, and remind me that I am not confessing what a horrible person I am but instead I am pointing out what isn’t working and how I am acting in my character defects. I need someone to stand for my sobriety and to show me how to get closer to the truth. I don’t need to wallow in my inventory or say how bad I am rather I need to dig in, tell my truth, surrender to a loving god because what I am doing is killing me, leave it behind and move into the virtues.

### CS: Any last thoughts?

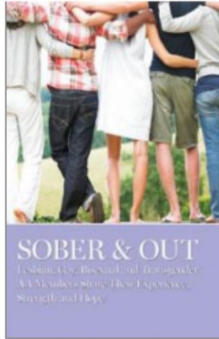
**1992:** What I have found is that for me, as I stay sober, it is always important to do the inventory. My emotions will keep me from my relationship with my god now, not my behaviors. Now, it is my emotions that will block me from my god, especially the emotions that go unchecked. Today, for me it is not as much about behavioral issues as it is about my emotional state.





### Introducing Grapevine's new book *Sober & Out*

At the suggestion of the Grapevine Conference Committee, Grapevine has published a new book on the topic of GLBTs in AA, featuring members' stories.



*Sober & Out*  
available  
September 5.

Visit [www.aagrapevine.org/books](http://www.aagrapevine.org/books) to learn more.

### Featured Group of the Month: *Into Service Group*

AA group in North Austin focused on studying *The AA Service Manual* combined with *12 Concepts for World Service* and other AA literature about General Service.

Meeting Schedule:

- \*Every Tuesday from 7-8pm
- \*First Tuesday of the month is 12 Concepts Guest Speaker
- \*All other meetings are literature discussion

Location:

Bethany United Methodist Church  
1010 Anderson Mill Road  
Austin, Tx 78750



## Recovery Word Search

Y W Y T Z Y N D U U F U W A I  
 E T T H H U E O W B P X N T O  
 A P I M X E U G F K H H S Y E  
 X F N A V S R T M F Q J K V B  
 N V A B F Z S E T M J M E A F  
 F A S I M E E L Y U J I P V E  
 F A N H B U R D I O L I M Q L  
 Q E I U M S F N I E U V U F L  
 W X V O O Z P A B T S A O Q O  
 H I G H E R P O W E R V R Q W  
 Q F B C Y G T G N A E Y Z E S  
 Z Z R K C E V T A S H C F T H  
 P R E A M B L E O D O R Z D I  
 T H A A N H V L E E M R Z W P  
 V F C S U O M Y N O N A V L D

ANONYMOUS  
 CAME TO BELIEVE  
 FELLOWSHIP  
 HIGHER POWER  
 INSANITY  
 LET GO AND LET GOD  
 PREAMBLE  
 SPONSOR  
 THERE YOU ARE

### A Hazelden Meditation

*Grace is when we notice the near-misses we survived instead of the wishes that didn't come true.*  
 ~Nancy Hull-Mast

We all have stories about the harrowing past: the times we woke up not knowing where we were, the open prescription bottle we couldn't remember emptying, the bashed-in fender, or the open front door of our home. How did we get from there to here? and why?

"There but for the grace of God..." is a saying that we come to appreciate when our mind finally clears. We were saved, many times. We have all read about people who weren't as lucky as we were. Curiously we wonder, why? Perhaps we should ponder, instead, what we can do with our lives now that we're here.

We have a unique contribution to make to our loved ones, or we wouldn't have "escaped." The next step is to listen to our inner voice for guidance. We have a job to do. It's time to get on with it.

**Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.**  
 ~ Melody Beattie



## 9th Promise

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will

## LOCAL Announcements:

### Hill toppers is MOVING:

Beginning October 3rd, 2014.

To:

Highland Park Baptist Church  
(at the upper rear entrance)  
5206 Balcones dr., 78731

### Midnight Meetings

Candlelight Crossover Meeting  
Fridays and Saturdays  
11:59pm @  
*We are Not Saints*  
900 Old Koenig Lane #131

### Fine New Chips

#### at Hill Country Intergroup

New chips on the shelves at the Hill Country Intergroup. Come check out what we got. Other colors available as well.



Brothers of the 4th dimension  
Announces a new Men's meeting  
Closed Discussion meeting focused on  
*The Solution* found in alcoholics anonymous

Located @

North Central Austin  
(Koenig/2222 + Burnet)  
5704 Adams ave  
Austin, Tx 78756

—Yellow House on Adams ave. in the Tin Roof—

## Finding the Spirit of the Thing

We're sometimes advised to "fake it until you make it." But how can anything false really lead us to recovery? Aren't we told that this is an honest program? We're not being dishonest by pushing ourselves to become actively involved in A.A.

The self-help moments have told us for years that we have to form an image of what we want to be in order to reach our goals. We are forming an image that corresponds to the sober people we want to be. We are actually rehearsing sober living and working to accept a picture of sobriety in our heart of hearts.

There is also much to be said for "faking it" enough to attend meetings and to try to benefit from association with people- even those we don't like. This puts us in line for the change we really need. A lot of members say that they "white knuckled it" during the first months or years of sobriety. If this worked to bring recovery, it had to be the right approach.

Even if there is rebellion within, today I will talk and act like the sober person I want to be.

~ unattributed



8	6		5		4			9
	4	5		9	2			3
2							5	7
	8			7	1	4		
	2	4		6			9	
9		1			3	7	8	6
4	3	2	6					8
			4			2		5
	1	9	3	2				4

**Step 9:**

*"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."*

After we have made a list of people we have harmed, have reflected carefully upon each instance, and have tried to possess ourselves of the right attitude in which to proceed, we will see that the making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can maintain our sobriety. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred, and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all.

- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 83

**In Our Own Words**

A collection of personal stories from the Grapevine that focuses on the difficulties



faced by alcoholics who are young in years and the sober joys that await them.

The book contains: honest accounts of drinking in the lives of young adults, how they managed to get and stay sober, the impact that practicing the principles of AA has had on their lives, and, the challenges and rewards of finally learning to live and to love, one day at a time.

**Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.**

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

**Prayer of the month:**

**A Pre-Inventory prayer:**

"God, please help me to honestly take stock. Help me to search out the flaws in my make-up which caused my failure. Help me to see where resentment has plagued me and resulted in spiritual malady, but more importantly help me to understand my part in these resentments. Help me to resolutely look for my own mistakes and to understand where I had been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened. Please help me to be searching and fearless in my endeavor to write my inventory."

(p. 64:2, 64:3, 67:2)

**This month in AA History: September**

In September of 1946, the first A.A. group in Mexico was formed. Also, this month in AA history:

- Sept 01, 1939 - First AA group founded in Chicago.
- Sept 11, 2001 - 30 Vesey St, New York. Location of AA's first office is destroyed during the World Trade Center attack.
- Sept 12, 1942 - U.S. Assist. Surgeon General Kolb speaks at dinner for Bill and Dr Bob.
- Sept 13, 1937 - Florence R, first female in AA in NY.
- Sept 13, 1941 - WHJP in Jacksonville, FL airs Spotlight on AA.
- Sept 17, 1954 - Bill D, AA #3 dies.
- Sept 18, 1947 - Dallas Central Office opens its doors.
- Sept 21, 1938 - Bill W. & Hank P. form Works Publishing Co.
- Sept 24, 1940 - Bill 12th steps Bobbie V., who later replaced Ruth Hock as his secretary in NY.

