

Introduction

Thank you for leading a session at the We Are Not a Glum Lot Retreat!

This document is a guide to help you lead your session. It contains:

- A preamble to start the meeting.
- Definitions and quotes to get your session started.
- A list of questions to kick off a guided discussion.
- A closing for the end (90 minutes after the start).

Your role as a session leader is to facilitate and to participate in meaningful discussion amongst the group. Encourage everyone to share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that we may stay sober and have a wonderful and spiritual experience this weekend. Cover as many questions as time allows and encourage balanced participation from everyone in your group. Feel free to add your own quotes, definitions, and questions.

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Preamble

Welcome to the today's session on <your principle>. My name is <your name> and I am an Alcoholic.

The “Not A Glum Lot Retreat” is a gathering of alcoholics that share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help one other to recover from alcoholism.

We are not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; we do not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorse nor oppose any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and have fun doing it. We Are Not A Glum Lot!

I am here to facilitate and to participate in a meaningful and spiritual discussion about <your principle>. We intend for everyone to participate.

Since some of you may not know each other yet, at the beginning of your first share, please state your:

- Name (last name optional)
- Sobriety date
- Home group and town
- Why you chose this principle

Let me start by sharing some definitions and quotes about <your principle>, then we'll take turns answering some questions about the topic.

Closing

Thank you for today's discussion. May we all take something from this discussion to help us grow spiritually as we trudge this road to happy destiny together. Let us join hands while we say the “we” version of the serenity prayer after a moment of silence.

God grant us the serenity
to accept the things we cannot change,
Courage to change the things we can,
And Wisdom to know the difference.

The next activity is <next activity> located at <next location>.

1. Honesty

Definitions

- Webster: adherence to the facts; the quality of being truthful, honest, and free of lies and deceit.
- Antonyms: Deception, Corruption, Insincerity, Falseness

AA Quotes

- *Rigorous **honesty**.* – BB p. 58
- *Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being **honest** with themselves.* – BB p. 58
- *More than most people, the alcoholic leads a **double life**.* – BB p. 73
- *The **deception** of others is nearly always rooted in the deception of ourselves.* – Bill W.
- *How **truth** makes us free is something that we AAs can well understand. It cuts the shackles that once bound us to alcohol.* – Bill W.
- *Sometimes we need to place love ahead of indiscriminate `factual **honesty**`. We cannot, under the guise of `perfect **honesty**`, cruelly and unnecessarily hurt others. Always one must ask, `What is the best and most living thing I can do?` – Bill W.*

Other Quotes

- *Anyone who doesn't take **truth** seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either.* – Albert Einstein

Questions

How would you define **Honesty**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

What is the difference between **Rigorous Honesty** and **Brutal Honesty**?

Growing up, what and how did you learn about **Honesty**?

What are the consequences of being **Dishonest**?

How is **Honesty** important to working the AA program?

What are examples of how you practice **Honesty** in your daily affairs?

When has **Honesty** been difficult in sobriety and how did you respond?

What are the rewards **Honesty**?

2. Hope

Definitions

- Webster: to cherish a desire with anticipation; to want something to happen or be true
- Antonyms: Hopelessness, Doubt, Despair, Expectation

AA Quotes

- *Each day, somewhere in the world, recovery begins when one alcoholic talks with another alcoholic, sharing experience, strength, and **hope**.* – BB p. xxii
- *Yet is it our great **hope** that all those who have yet found no answer may begin to find one in the pages of this book and will presently join us on the high road to a new freedom.* – BB p. xxi
- *AA is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and **hope** with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism* – Grapevine Preamble

Other Quotes

- **H.O.P.E** = Hold on. Pain ends. – Internet
- **Hope** is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness – Desmond Tutu
- *Everything that is done in the world is done with **hope*** – Martin Luther
- *We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite **hope*** – MLK Jr.

Questions

How would you define **Hope**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

When and why have you felt **Hopeless**? What happened? How did you regain **Hope**?

What is the difference between **Hope** and **Expectation**?

How is **Hope** important to working the AA program?

What are sources of **Hope** for you today?

How can we help others who struggle or have lost **Hope**?

3a. Surrender

Definitions

- Webster: cease resistance to an enemy or opponent and submit to their authority.
- To yield to a higher power
- To release the need for control and step into a place of authentic power and strength
- Antonyms: Control, Self-will, Fight

AA Quotes (TODO)

- *Such is the paradox of AA regeneration: strength arising out of complete defeat and weakness, the loss of one's old life as a condition for finding a new one. – AA Comes of Age p. 45.*
- *It is when we try to make our will conform with God's that we bring to us it rightly... Our while trouble had been the misuse of will power. – 12x12 p. 40*
- *Surrender to Win – AA*
- *Let go, let God – AA*

Questions

How has the definition of **Surrender** changed for you personally, and how would you define it today?

How is **Surrender** important to working the AA program?

How do you know when to **Fight** or when to **Surrender**?

What are the results of asserting **Self-will** vs. **Surrender**?

How do you practice **Surrender** in your daily affairs?

3b. Faith

Definitions

- Webster: belief and trust in and loyalty to God
- Antonyms: Disbelief, Distrust, Uncertainty

AA Quotes

- **Faith** without works is dead. – BB p. 88
- *Deep down in every man, woman, and child is the fundamental idea of a God. I may be obscured by calamity, by pomp, by worship of other things, but in some form or other it is there. For **faith** in a Power greater than ourselves, and miraculous demonstrations of that Power in human lives are facts as old as man.* – BB p. 55
- *The moment we catch even a glimpse of God's will, the moment we begin to see truth, justice, and love as the real and eternal things in life, we are no longer deeply disturbed by all the seeming evidence to the contrary that surrounds us in purely human affairs.* – Bill W.
- *The verdict of the ages is that men of **faith** seldom lack courage* – Bill W.

Other Quotes

- **Faith** is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase – MLK Jr.
- **Faith** consists in believing when it is beyond the power of reason to believe – Voltaire
- **Faith** is not belief without proof, but trust without reservation – D. Elton Trueblood
- *Doubt is not the opposite of **faith**; it is one element of **faith*** – Paul Tillich

Questions

How would you define **Faith**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

Growing up, how and what did you learn about **Faith**?

What is the difference between **Experience** and **Faith**?

How is **Faith** important to working the AA program?

How can **Faith** help you in your daily affairs?

What must you have **Faith** in to be successful in recovery?

4. Courage

Definitions

- Webster: mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty.
- Antonyms: Fear, Insecurity, Weakness

AA Quotes

- *The verdict of the ages is that faith means **courage*** – BB p. 68
- *Good judgement, a careful sense of timing, **courage**, and prudence – these are the [principles] we shall need when we take Step Nine.* – 12x12 p. 83
- *Can we accept poverty, sickness, loneliness, and bereavement with **courage** and serenity? ... Yes* – 12x12 p. 112
- *God grant me the ... **courage** to change the things I can.* – Serenity Prayer

Other Quotes

- **Courage** is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear – Mark Twain
- **Courage** is fear holding on a minute longer – George S. Patton
- **Courage** is grace under pressure – Ernest Hemingway
- **Courage** is not simply one of the [principles], but the form of every [principle] at the testing point – C. S. Lewis

Questions

How would you define **Courage**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

Growing up, how did you learn to cope with **Fear**?

What is the difference between **Courage** and **Fearlessness**?

What are the consequences of living in **Fear**?

What are the rewards of living with **Courage**?

How is **Courage** important to working the AA program?

How and where in your life do you wish to practice more **Courage**?

5. Integrity

Definitions

- Webster: firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values.
- Doing the right thing even when nobody is watching.
- Aligning our actions with our values and intentions.
- Saying only what you mean, and doing what you say.
- Antonyms: Untrustworthiness, Unreliability, Duplicity, Fraud

AA Quotes

- We judge ourselves by our best intentions; others judge us by our actions. – AA

Other Quotes

- *Be impeccable to our word.* – Agreement 1, don Miguel Ruiz
- ***Integrity*** is choosing courage over comfort; choosing what is right over what is fun, fast or easy; and choosing to practice our values rather than simply professing them. – Brene Brown

Questions

How would you define **Integrity**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

Growing up, how did you learn about **Integrity**?

What are the consequences of not practicing **Integrity**?

How is **Integrity** important to working the AA program?

What are examples of how you practice **Integrity** in your daily affairs?

What are the rewards of practicing **Integrity**?

6. Willingness

Definitions

- Webster: done, borne, or accepted by choice or without reluctance.
- Antonyms: Reluctance, Unwillingness, Indifference.

Quotes

- *There is only one key, and it is called **willingness**.* – 12x12 p. 34
- *Though self-will may slam it shut again, as it frequently does, it will always respond the moment we again pick up the key of **willingness**.* – 12x12 p. 35
- *We have emphasized **willingness** as being indispensable.* – BB p. 76
- ***Willingness**, honesty, and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery.* – BB p. 586
- *We grow by our **willingness** to face and rectify errors and cover them into assets.* – BB p. 124
- *An honest regret for hams done, a genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a **willingness** to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets we shall seek.* – 12x12 p. 95
- ***Willingness** is a gift of desperation* – AA
- *Being **willing** is not enough, we must do.* – Leonardo da Vinci

Questions

How would you define **Willingness**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

How did you find **Willingness** to work the program of AA at first?

Have you ever struggled with **Willingness** in sobriety, what was that like, and how did you overcome that?

What are the consequences of **Reluctance**, **Unwillingness**, or **Indifference**?

How can we help members who are struggling with **Willingness**?

7. Humility

Definitions

- Webster: freedom from pride or arrogance.
- Antonyms: Pride, Arrogance, Egoism

AA Quotes

- *[Tradition 12] reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities, that we are actually to practice a genuine **humility**.* – BB p. 566
- *Anonymity is real **humility**.* – 12x12 p.13
- *Where **humility** had formally stood for a forced feeding of humble pie, it now begins to mean the nourishing ingredient which can give us serenity.* – 12x12 p. 74
- *That basic ingredient of all **humility**, a desire to seek and do God's will, was missing.* – 12x12 p. 72
- *A great point in our lives came when we sought for **humility** as something we really wanted, rather than as something we must have.* – 12x12 p. 75
- *The whole emphasis of Step Seven is on **humility**.* – 12x12 p. 76
- *By their example they showed us that **humility** and intellect could be compatible, provided we placed **humility** first.* – 12x12 p. 30
- *Everywhere we saw failure and misery transformed by **humility** into priceless assets.* – 12x12 p. 75
- *For without some degree of humility, no alcoholic can stay sober at all.* – 12x12 p. 70
- ***Humility** is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less* – AA
- ***Humility** is remaining teachable* – AA

Questions

How has the definition of **Humility** changed for you personally, and how would you define it today?

What are the consequences of **Pride**, **Arrogance**, and **Egoism**?

How is **Humility** important to working the AA program?

What are examples of how you practice **Humility** in your daily affairs?

What are the rewards of practicing **Humility**?

8. Love

Definitions

- Webster: affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests.
- ChatGPT: At its core, love involves feelings of warmth, fondness, empathy, and compassion towards others. It often motivates individuals to prioritize the well-being and happiness of loved ones, to support and nurture them, and to share intimate and meaningful connections. Love can also be expressed through acts of kindness, generosity, understanding, and forgiveness.
- Antonyms: Indifference, Resentment, Hate

AA Quotes

- **Love** and tolerance is our code – BB, p 84
- *Finally, we begin to see that all people, including ourselves, are to some extent emotionally ill as well as frequently wrong, and then we approach true tolerance and see what real **love** for our fellows actually means.* – 12x12 p.92
- *When brimming with gratitude, one's heartbeat must surely result in outgoing **love**, the finest emotion that we can ever know* – Bill W.
- *Let us **love** you until you can **love** yourself* – AA

Other Quotes

- *Where there is **love** there is life.* – Mahatma Gandhi

Questions

How would you define **Love**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

Growing up, how did you learn about **Love**?

What is the difference between **Loving** and **Liking** someone?

How is **Love** important to working the AA program?

What are examples of how you practice **Love** in your daily affairs?

What are the consequences of **Hate**?

What are the rewards of practicing **Love**?

9a. Responsibility

Definitions

- Webster: the quality or state of being responsible: such as moral, legal, or mental accountability.
- Antonyms: Irresponsibility, Carelessness, Disregard

AA Quotes

- *The readiness to take the full consequences of our past acts, and to take **responsibility** for well-being of other at the same time, is the very spirit of Step Nine.* – 12x12 p. 87
- *The essence of all growth is a willingness to change for the better and then an unrelenting willingness to shoulder whatever **responsibility** this entails.* – Bill W. Grapevine July 1965.
- *All AA progress can be reckoned in terms of just two words: humility and responsibility. Our whole spiritual development can be accurately measured by our degree of adherence to these magnificent standards.* – Bill W. 1965 talk

Other Quotes

- *You cannot escape the **responsibility** of tomorrow by evading it today.* – Abraham Lincoln
- *With freedom comes **responsibility**.* – Eleanor Roosevelt

Questions

Growing up, what did I learn about being **Responsible** or **Irresponsible**?

How have I evaded **Responsibility** in the past?

What are the consequences of evading **Responsibilities**?

What are my **Responsibilities** in sobriety to myself and to others?

What are the rewards of practicing **Responsibility** in my life?

9b. Justice

Definitions

- Webster: the principle or ideal of right action
- Antonyms: Injustice, Prejudice

AA Quotes

- *Courtesy, kindness, **justice**, and love are the keynotes by which we may come into harmony with practically anybody.* – 12x12 p. 93
- *How can I make it right?* – AA
- *With those we dislike we can begin to practice **justice** and courtesy, perhaps going out of our way to understand and help them.* – 12x12 p. 93

Other Quotes

- *Peace and **justice** are two sides of the same coin* – Dwight D. Eisenhower
- *True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of **justice*** – MLK Jr.

Questions

Growing up, what did I learn about **Justice** and **Injustice**?

How have I created **Injustice** and what are the consequences?

What is an example of an **Injustice** you created and how did you make it right (ie, created **Justice**)?

What are the rewards of **Justice**?

What is an example of an **Injustice** you wish to make right?

10a. Discipline

Definitions

- Webster: orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior
- Doing what needs to be done, even when you don't feel like doing it?
- Antonyms: Disorder, Chaos, Unmanageability

AA Quotes

- *We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God **discipline** us in a simple way we have just outlined.* – BB p. 86-88
- *Confession is an ancient **discipline*** – 12x12 p. 6
- *Progress not perfection.* – AA
- *Keep coming back.* – AA
- *One step at a time.* – AA

Other Quotes

- *Motivation gets you going, but **discipline** keeps you going.* – John C. Maxwell
- ***Discipline** is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.* – Jim Rohn

Questions

How did lack of **Discipline** create **Unmanageability** in my life?

How is **Discipline** important to working the AA program?

What are your daily **Disciplines** to stay sober?

How do you find the willingness to do what needs to be done, even when you don't feel like doing it?

What are the rewards of practicing your **Discipline**?

10b. Perseverance

Definitions

- Webster: continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition.
- Antonyms: Complacency

AA Quotes

- *It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us.* – 12x12 p. 90
- *We thought “conditions” drove us to drink, and when we tried to correct these conditions and found that we couldn’t do so to our entire satisfaction, our drinking went out of hand we became alcoholics. It never occurred to us that we needed to change ourselves to meet conditions, whatever they were.* – 12x12 p. 47
- *... sobriety is only a bare beginning... our awakening has to go on... Regardless of worldly success or failure, regardless of pain or joy, regardless of sickness of health or even death itself, a new life of endless possibilities can be lived if we are willing to continue our awakening...* – Bill W., Grapevine Dec 1957
- *Progress not perfection.* – AA
- *Keep coming back.* – AA
- *One day at a time.* – AA

Other Quotes

- **Perseverance** is not a long race; it’s many short races one after another. – Walter Elliot

Questions

How would you define **Perseverance**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

Growing up, how did you learn about **Perseverance**?

How is **Perseverance** important to working the AA program?

What are examples of how you practice **Perseverance** in your daily affairs?

What are the rewards of practicing **Perseverance**?

11. Spirituality

Definitions

- Webster: of, relating to, consisting of, or affecting the spirit.
- ChatGPT: Spirituality refers to the quality or state of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things. It encompasses beliefs, practices, experiences, and values related to the inner self, personal growth, meaning, purpose, and connection to something greater than oneself, which may include a higher power, the universe, nature, or a divine being. Spirituality often involves seeking a deeper understanding of life, existence, morality, and the interconnectedness of all things, and it can be expressed through religious traditions, meditation, prayer, mindfulness, ethical living, and various spiritual practices.
- Antonyms: Materialism, Carnality

AA Quotes

- *Maybe there are as many definitions of **spiritual** awakening as there are people who have had them.* – 12x12 p. 106
- *We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our **spiritual** condition.* – BB p. 85
- *The principles we have set down our guides to progress. We claim **spiritual** progress rather than **spiritual** perfection.* – BB p. 60
- *We may have had certain **spiritual** beliefs, but now we begin to have a **spiritual** experience.* – BB p. 75
- *The **spiritual** life is no a theory.* – BB p. 83
- *The point is, that we are willing to grow along **spiritual** lines.* – BB .p 60
- *For us, material well-being always follows **spiritual** progress; it never precedes.* – BB p. 127

Other Quotes

- *The only think you ever have is now.* – Eckhart Tolle

Questions

How has the definition of **Spirituality** changed for you personally, and how would you define it today?

What is the difference between **Spirituality** and **Religion**?

How is **Spirituality** important to working the AA program?

What does it mean to have a **Spiritual** experience?

What are examples of how you practice **Spirituality** in your daily affairs?

What are the rewards of being **Spiritual**?

12. Service

Definitions

- Webster: contribution to the welfare of others
- Antonyms: Harm, Disregard, Abandonment

AA Quotes

- *I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.* – Declaration of the 30th Anniversary International Conference, 1965
- *Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum **service** to God and the people about us.* – BB p. 77
- *AA is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.* – Service Manual, p. 5
- *Carry the message, not the alcoholic* – AA

Other Quotes

- *The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the **service** of others* – Mahatma Gandhi

Questions

How would you define **Service**, today, and what does it mean to you personally?

How is **Service** important to working the AA program?

What are examples of how you provide **Service** in your daily affairs?

What are the rewards of practicing **Service**?

What are pitfalls you have experienced with being of **Service**, and how can they be avoided?