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The Serenity Times

The monthly newsletter of the Darwin District



Awake yet?

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps...- Step Twelve, How It Works, p 60

If we have made searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves and shared it with God and another human being, then by the time we are halfway through our amends, we will have awoken spiritually. What does it mean for an alcoholic to be spiritually awake? It means being in conscious contact with God.

A spiritual awakening is only the beginning of our new life in the world of the Spirit. As we develop our conscious contact with God through a daily practice of prayer and meditation, we broaden and deepen the channel between ourselves and God and we awaken further.



Untreated

I worked a 12-Step program with an AA sponsor for years but I didn't have a spiritual awakening, consequently I continued to suffer from the bedevillments described on page 52 of the Big Book, which are the symptoms of untreated alcoholism.

I spoke with my sponsor about it and she suggested more 12th Step work and AA service. At eight years' sober, I was run off my feet with 12th Step and AA service commitments, yet I was getting sicker.

At nine years' sober I unravelled, which is one of the things that happens to untreated alcoholics. Had I suicided, I would have died, sober, of untreated alcoholism in the rooms of AA. Eventually I found someone in AA who had had a spiritual awakening and she showed me a way of working Steps 1 to 9 that at last produced the level of humility needed to bring about a spiritual awakening.

So many AA members attempt vainly to recover from alcoholism through AA meetings, AA service and 12th Step work instead of through Steps 1 to 9. If you have completed Step Five and you are yet to feel God's presence, find someone in AA who does and ask to be shown how to have a spiritual awakening, then go back to Step One because you have missed something.



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Service sponsor

A newly elected Area Delegate in 2005, I had only minor experience in general service. It was suggested that I find myself a service sponsor, someone highly experienced in general service who could provide me with guidance. I found not one but two service sponsors and I'm glad I did because through them I received the benefit of 35 years of AA general service.

I consulted my service sponsors often, including when debate on a topic became heated or controversial. My service sponsors taught me that when engaged in AA service, it is vital to be knowledgeable about the AA Service Manual, AA Guidelines, the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts, that there is no politics in AA because there is no government in AA, that debate should be respectful and unhurried, that decision making should be informed and in conformity with the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts, that God runs AA through the Group consciences of the AA Groups, that every service body in AA is the humble servant of the AA Groups and that as the Area Delegate, I too was a humble servant.

Section 9 of the AA Service Manual provides that Regional Trustees make good service sponsors because they are usually very experienced in AA service, but any AA member who is knowledgeable and experienced in AA service will fill the bill.

District Committee Member

The District Committee Member (DCM) is the Chair of the Darwin District Committee and the Darwin District's representative on the Area A Committee. The main functions of a DCM are to provide good leadership of the District and a vital, active link between the Groups in the District and AA Australia-wide and worldwide.

The responsibilities of a DCM include attendance at District and Area meetings, chairing meetings of the District, keeping General Service Representatives (GSRs) informed about the activities of the General Service Conference, assisting the Area Delegate to prepare the Conference report to the District, holding workshops and sharing sessions on service topics, talking to Groups about the value of general service work, ensuring that the District's meeting agendas have real purpose in carrying AA's message to alcoholics, and acquainting GSRs with the AA Service Manual, the Twelve Concepts and the numerous AA guidelines which concern public information and cooperation with the professional community.

The DCM leads the Darwin District Committee and keeps the members of the Committee on track toward achieving the Groups' plans, goals and vision for the District in carrying AA's message to alcoholics. As a member of the Area Committee, the DCM is responsible for communicating the collective Group Conscience of the Groups in the Darwin District, including minority opinions, to Area A. The DCM also serves as a vital, active two-way link between Area A and the Darwin District.

Reference: *Australian AA Service Manual*, revised 8th edition, Section Four, 'The District & The District Committee Member (DCM)', downloadable at aaservice.org.au