

The Daily Brew

District 55 AA Newsletter

Mar/Apr '26

The Gift of Sponsorship in AA

***Information is from the AA Big Book as well as questionnaires with several of the District 55 Trusted Servants

Sponsorship is at the heart of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is one alcoholic helping another—sharing experience, strength, and hope—not as an expert, but as someone who has found freedom through the Twelve Steps. Questionnaires were sent to a number of members, and what follows—along with some additional thoughts from your Newsletter Chair—reflects what they had to say.

At its core, sponsorship is about guidance through the program, precisely as it is written in the Alcoholics Anonymous. As one member shared, “We should only be offering guidance based on the Twelve Steps in the Big Book. I’m not a banker, relationship coach, or mental health expert—just an alcoholic who’s been relieved of his alcoholism through the Twelve Steps. That’s what I have to share.” This perspective on a sponsor’s role comes from Johnny L., Alt DCM and DOTR home group member. He continues, “My take is to help the new person gain an understanding of the Program as outlined in the Big Book, then continue to offer support as they grow in sobriety.” For Johnny, sponsorship is firmly rooted in the program—not personal theory.

One common question newcomers ask is how to choose a sponsor.

Jim W. poses the following questions that someone looking for a sponsor should think about: “Does he have what you want? Does he walk the way he talks? Does he want to get you through the Steps? Does he talk to you on your level? Is he a good listener? Does he want to share what the program says—or just his personal opinion?” This isn’t about popularity—it can be the difference between life and death, or between merely white-knuckling sobriety and truly enjoying life.

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Sponsorship in AA

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Timing matters, too. Many long-sober members agree: don't wait. Getting a sponsor early—and beginning step work right away—helps build a solid foundation for sobriety. Consistent communication, which can take many forms (phone calls, texts, Zoom, or face-to-face conversations), is key to mutual understanding. What matters most is regular, honest contact. As Travis L. suggests, “Daily for 30 days. Once a week and as needed after.”

Sponsorship is also not permanent by obligation. If the relationship is no longer helpful or a good fit, it is okay—and sometimes necessary—to change sponsors. Sponsorship is a spiritual partnership, and fit matters. Staying stuck out of fear or guilt can hinder growth. The total sobriety represented by those interviewed is 142 years, and each of the five members has had three to four sponsors—mostly due to sponsors passing away or geographical changes.

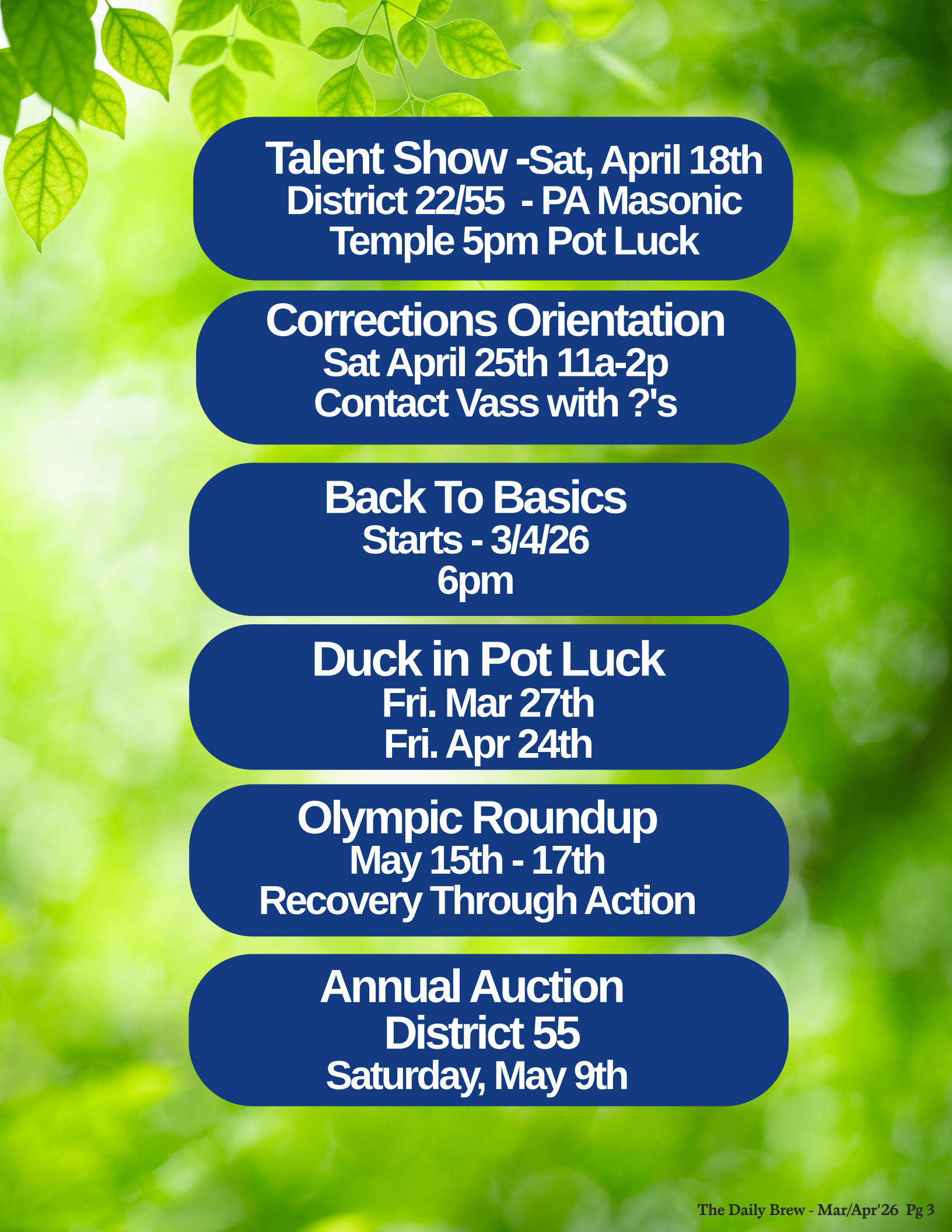
One question posed to the group was: How do you “break up” with a sponsor? Brenda C. shared, “I was taught to do a mini Fourth Step to find my responsibilities or part, and then to make amends for that.”

As sobriety grows, so does responsibility. Carole J. also highlights something less often discussed—sponsorship sponsors and service sponsors. When she was newly sponsoring, she found herself spending too much time talking to her own sponsor about her sponsees. Her sponsor suggested she get a sponsorship sponsor to help organize her time around step work. Similarly, a service sponsor can guide members through service commitments both inside and outside the service structure. These additional layers of support can bring balance, clarity, and serenity.

Across these long-sober members, several themes stand out:

- **Work the Steps:** Sponsorship is about the Twelve Steps—not advice-giving.
- **Look for example, not charisma:** “Does he have what you want?”
- **Act quickly:** Don't delay getting a sponsor.
- **It's okay to change:** Sponsorship is relational and spiritual—fit matters.
- **Stay connected:** Meetings, fellowship, and regular contact are vital.
- **Keep it spiritual:** Similarity in age or interests is secondary to shared recovery.

After decades of sobriety, each of these members still has a sponsor. That may be the strongest message of all: sponsorship is not just for the newcomer—it is a lifelong thread in recovery. As they collectively demonstrate, sponsorship isn't about perfection; it's about one alcoholic helping another walk the path toward freedom. As the Good Book reminds us, “Faith without works is dead.”



**Talent Show -Sat, April 18th
District 22/55 - PA Masonic
Temple 5pm Pot Luck**

**Corrections Orientation
Sat April 25th 11a-2p
Contact Vass with ?'s**

**Back To Basics
Starts - 3/4/26
6pm**

**Duck in Pot Luck
Fri. Mar 27th
Fri. Apr 24th**

**Olympic Roundup
May 15th - 17th
Recovery Through Action**

**Annual Auction
District 55
Saturday, May 9th**

Towards Recovery

Turning

- INTERVIEW WITH Jim W

On August 21, 1986, at 33 years old, Jim W. made a decision that would change the course of his life. Now a bit older, he celebrates nearly four decades of sobriety. A home group member of the Dog on the Roof, Jim's recovery story is deeply intertwined with another life-saving practice: woodturning.



When Jim got sober, something unexpected happened – he had time. For years, he worked in the heavy equipment industry as a truck driver, mechanic, service manager, and eventually a master trainer. Long hours were the norm. When he wasn't drinking, he was working. But sobriety created space. And space can feel uncomfortable. Shortly after he quit drinking, his wife Pattie encouraged him to find something constructive to do. When she asked what he had loved in high school, his answer came quickly: wood shop.



They purchased a Shopsmith machine – putting it on a credit card despite tight finances – and Jim began making furniture. For nearly 20 years, woodworking became his steady companion while he continued working full time.

After a heart attack in 2006, Jim's craft took a turn – literally. While attending the Del Mar Fair in San Diego, he saw an exhibition of segmented woodturning and was captivated by the intricate designs made from hundreds of precisely cut pieces.

He joined the San Diego Wood Turners club and began learning through demonstrations, hands-on practice, books, DVDs, and mentorship. As a self-described tactile learner, he learned best by doing.

Turning Towards Recovery

Continued

Segmented turning requires remarkable precision. Jim designs patterns on a computer program that calculates the exact number of pieces, widths, and angles. Each ring is cut, glued into a perfect circle, stacked, and then mounted on the lathe. Some bowls contain 800 individual pieces. One intricate piece required nearly 80 hours of work.

Not all of Jim's work is segmented. When he tires of precision work, he turns to natural wood bowls. "The wood tells me what it wants to be," he says.

He favors highly figured woods such as quilted maple, flame maple, and maple burls, as well as exotics like Purple Heart, ebony, and padauk. Sometimes he adds turquoise inlays. Other times, he lets spalting – the dark lines created by competing fungi – create natural 'battle scars' in the wood.

Wood moves as it dries. It cracks. It warps. It reveals hidden inclusions and knots. A bowl that begins as functional may become art because of an imperfection discovered mid-turn.



Jim's First Piece

Woodturning is more than creative expression – it is grounding and therapeutic. The focus required at the lathe keeps Jim present. "It's dangerous if I don't focus," he explains. The steady rhythm of turning, shaping, sanding, and finishing gives him an outlet for stress, health concerns, and daily worries.

Sobriety created a gap. Wood filled it with meaning.

Jim rarely throws a piece away. If something doesn't turn out as planned, he salvages it or repurposes it. That resilience mirrors his recovery journey.

In woodturning, as in sobriety, imperfections don't mean failure. They mean character. They mean growth. They tell a story.

For nearly 40 years, Jim has turned toward both recovery and the lathe – shaping not only wood, but a steady, purposeful life.

Steps & Traditions

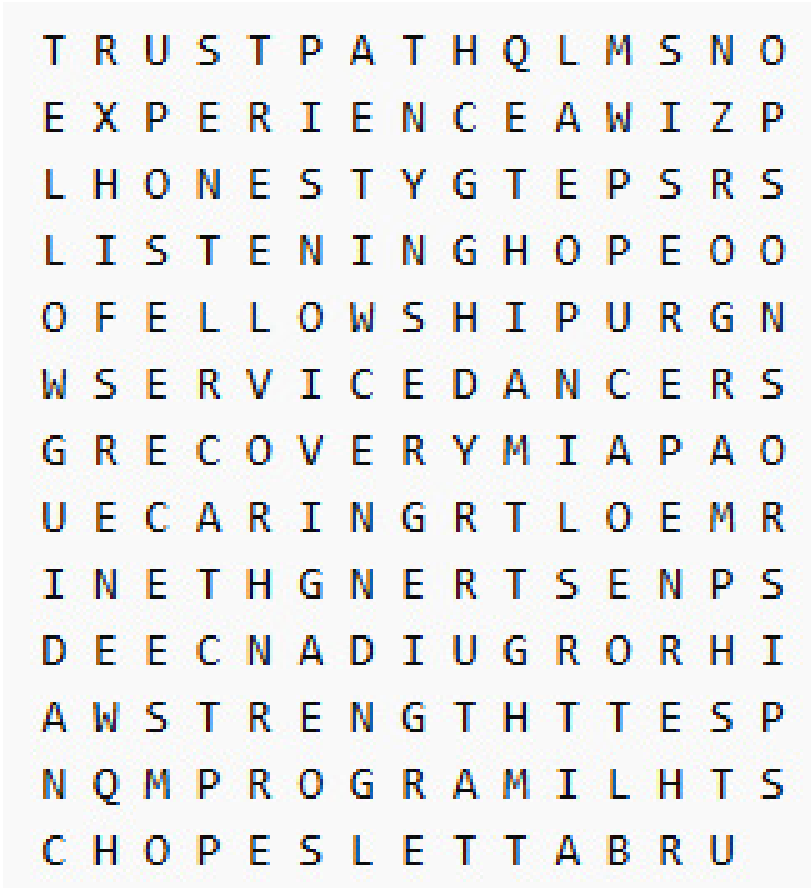
Step 3 - Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Tradition 3: The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.



Concept 3 - To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. – the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives – with a traditional ‘Right of Decision.’

- SPONSOR
- SPONSORSHIP
- EXPERIENCE
- STRENGTH
- HOPE
- RECOVERY
- HONESTY
- TRUST
- LISTENING
- GUIDANCE
- SERVICE
- FELLOWSHIP
- STEPS
- PROGRAM
- PATH



Steps & Traditions

Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves

Tradition 4: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole



Concept 4: Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional 'Right of Participation'

In simple terms (according to ChatGPT): Concept Four ensures that everyone who carries responsibility in AA-trusted servants, committee members, delegates-has a voice and a vote. Participation builds trust, prevents concentration of power, and keeps AA guided by group conscience rather than authority.

Note from the Newsletter Chair

Welcome to the District 55 Newsletter., in this edition we are giving thanks for all the service(s) AA members provide. If you would like to provide any article ideas, personal stories, poems or some hint of what you would like to see in future editions to the following email address:

newsletter.district55@gmail.com - or scan the QR code

Thanks - Your News Letter Chair - Holly K.

**all photo's and interviews are published with consent

Scan QR code to send idea's or questions

