

Spotlight On Sobriety May 2026



In this month's publication:

Click the link below to jump to that section:

- [Principles Behind The Steps #12](#)
 - [The 66th ICYPAA](#)
 - [WIC \(Women's International Conference\) 2026](#)
 - [Member May AA Anniversaries](#)
-

Principles Behind The Steps #12



I remember walking into the rooms in early recovery hearing the steps read aloud, a mumbo jumbo of words that made as much sense to me as a recipe written in a foreign language. Over and over again, I'd ponder the often-shared statement "love and service is our code" - curious as to what the phrase had to do with not drinking. As I became willing to take the suggestions of opening my ears, listening for the similarities, and watching the habits of those who had what I wanted, the pieces of the puzzle began to come together.

The principle behind Step 12 in Alcoholics Anonymous is said to be the whole heart of our program. *"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."*

Step 12 represents a significant shift from selfishness to selflessness. Where we once merely survived, we became willing to thrive. Walking through isolation, a land with which we were all too familiar, we found unexpected connections with like-minded people with whom we would otherwise have never crossed paths.

The **Principle of Love** can be confusing for some of us, learning to re-structure in our



mind's eye the true meaning of love in recovery. Many of us came from households where unconditional love was limited or nonexistent. And some of us believed that intimate encounters without a foundation of trust, security and safety were love. We gradually learn that love in recovery isn't romantic, but rather a shared experience in a judgment-free zone filled with patience, imperfections and grace. We learn love = action, also known as the **Principle**

of Service – including but not limited to sharing a smile, making coffee, welcoming a newcomer, exchanging phone numbers, sharing with honest intention, bringing a meeting to those homebound or in hospitals and institutions, accepting a meeting service commitment or serving as an intergroup representative, and sponsoring others. Actively working Step 12 allows us to be mindful of helping the newcomer, keeps us out of self and certainly increases a sense of belonging, accountability and purpose. Embracing an 'attitude of gratitude' maintains our recovery while we learn to 'give it away to keep it.'

Prior to reaching Step 12, we learn to focus on honesty, hope, faith, courage, integrity, willingness, humility, brotherly love, discipline, perseverance and awareness. With guided self-reflection and inventory, we become ready to embrace the principle of love + service = sustained sobriety.

So, we open the doors to thousands of Alcoholics Anonymous meetings across the globe on a daily basis, waiting for the newcomers to courageously walk through those doors, hopefully providing us with an opportunity to be of service. Not knowing what to expect, newcomers desperate for guidance and connection, take a breath and walk through a church basement door, community center or storefront - while facing fear and confusion that trails years of mistrust. For those of us living under the LGBTQ+ umbrella, this journey can be one that manifests even deeper fears, as we search for safety, trust and community to be our authentic selves in sobriety - in a judgment-free zone.

Thanks to the General Service Office (GSO) of Alcoholics Anonymous first recognizing the special interest group that preceded GaL-AA (Gays and Lesbians in Alcoholics Anonymous) in 1981 – LGBTQ+ meetings have become more visible and been added to meeting guides around the globe, allowing queer Folx to find us. Our hope is to provide a warm welcome and safe space for everyone seeking recovery, to meet others and grow in service and sobriety.



“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs” offers us an opportunity to welcome our LGBTQ+ community members at meetings; carrying the message by sharing our experience, strength and hope; sponsoring; volunteering;

accepting service commitments at our local meetings - even providing representation at area and regional levels; working with Roundups; and serving on the Executive Board of GaL-AA, which I have the privilege of doing as an Advisor this year.

Indeed, “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.”

In love and service,

Julie B.
Milwaukee, WI.

The 66th ICYPAA Sept 3 - 6th 2026

We're excited to finally share the theme for

The 66th ICYPAA in Michigan:

"On Awakening"

Straight out of pages 86-87 of the Big Book: simple, practical, and something we try to live every day. This year, we're building the weekend around that idea... what it actually looks like whether you're starting fresh or continuing to stay grounded, living this one day at a time.

Our Programs team is putting together a lineup that's grounded in the book and real to how we live today. And outside the meetings, this is ICYPAA. Thousands of young people in recovery, connecting, laughing, staying up too late, and actually enjoying sobriety together.

This is one of those weekends you will never forget.

Please copy the main flyer and send it to your friends.

Help us get it everywhere.

If you're planning to come, please register as soon as you can. Early registrations make a huge difference when planning. They help us plan responsibly and put on the best weekend possible for everyone. Please take a minute to register today.

Register Today - [Click Here](#)

Book your hotel room here - [Click Here](#)

**THE 66TH ICYPAA
MICHIGAN**

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG
PEOPLE IN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

< ON AWAKENING >

**SEPTEMBER
3RD-6TH, 2026**

The Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
187 Monroe Ave NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan

[REGISTER](#)

[HOTEL](#)

www.icypaa.org



REPORT - International Women's Conference - 2026

The last AA International Women's Conference I attended was in 2008 in Portland, Oregon. It's where I met my sponsor, who continues to be my recovery mountain guide.

Learning this year's 62nd annual IWC conference was in Des Moines, Iowa - I planned for a short road trip to attend in person. To my dismay – and excitement that so many sober women were gathering in one place -- I learned the conference had reached in-person capacity. An online option to participate was offered for which I quickly signed up. I was able to choose from a variety of speaker meetings, panel discussions and more.

I experienced an incredibly full weekend of planned meetings and activities. Of particular note was the 90 minute LGBTQ+ panel discussion where 4 Midwestern queer, sober women shared their experience, strength and hope. An engaging moderator led a Q&A where online participants were able to share questions in the chat, which the panel members took turns answering. I deeply appreciated each individual panelist's story, focusing on our similarities rather than our differences. At the conclusion of the conference, my heart was filled with gratitude to have had the privilege of gathering (online) with so many sober compañeras.

That we have the capacity through technology to connect with other sober human beings across the world continues to baffle and amaze me, period. And that in today's world, LGBTQ+ sober human beings are recognized, respected and included in Alcoholics Anonymous is a profound gift.



I'm looking forward to the 63rd annual IWC conference in Buffalo, NY (February 11-14, 2027).

www.internationalwomensconference.org

Julie B.
Milwaukee, WI.

Members May AA Anniversaries

G **a** **L**-AA

Celebrating Our Sobriety Milestones



To add or edit your sobriety date, click on the link in the email you received from us. It is in the footer of the email where it says “update your

preferences”. If you are not an email registered member yet, please [click here](#) to sign up.

First Name	Last Initial	Sobriety Date	Years
Adam	R	May 1, 1983	43
Alan	P	May 23, 1988	38
Anthony	B	May 15, 2011	15
Bobby	T	May 15, 2010	16
Brian	K	May 12, 1989	37
Bryce	S	May 5, 2025	1
Darren	D	May 26, 2025	1
David	O	May 15, 2008	18
Don	H	May 21, 2023	3
Heather	N	May 25, 1987	39
Iam	M	May 5, 1982	44
Jackie	S	May 23, 1982	44
Jason	C	May 4, 2013	13
Jeremy	C	May 6, 2022	4
Jill	J	May 26, 2017	9
Jim	D	May 22, 2007	19
Jiri	H	May 5, 2013	13
John	W	May 21, 1977	49
Kathy	H	May 2, 2015	11
ken	W	May 4, 1989	37
Kim		May 14, 2022	4
Kyle	C	May 5, 2022	4
Leigh Ann	M	May 29, 2022	4
Lori	S	May 15, 2002	24
LuLu	T	May 2, 1993	33
Marshall	B	May 17, 1987	39
Paul	C	May 22, 1972	54
Randy	F	May 2, 1985	41
RICHARD	A	May 15, 2021	5
Ross	M	May 27, 2018	8
Sheila	M	May 22, 1998	28
Stephanie	B	May 13, 1985	41
Stephen	F	May 12, 1998	28
Steven	M	May 17, 2021	5
Sue	T	May 29, 1995	31
susan	M	May 1, 2016	10
Troy	B-D	May 24, 1999	27
Zoraida	R	May 10, 2010	16

Spotlight On Sobriety May 2026

The Spotlight On Sobriety May 2026 features personal stories, articles, and reflections submitted by members and friends of the fellowship. The views expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of [Alcoholics Anonymous](#) or [GaL-AA](#).

Statement of Inclusion

<https://www.gal-aa.org/statementofinclusion>

GaL-AA exists to serve lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender people, queers and others in *Alcoholics Anonymous* regardless of how they self-identify. GaL-AA embraces all members of the AA Fellowship.

Your GaL-AA Newsletter Team

SpotlightOnSobriety@gal-aa.org

Become a GaL-AA Supporting Member

<https://www.gal-aa.org/members>

Become a GaL-AA Member

<https://www.gal-aa.org/members>

Join our Social Media Channels

<https://www.gal-aa.org/members/social-media>

