

THE UPDATE

Issue 1 Panel 76 Area 86 Dostrict 14

Spring 2026

Welcome to Panel 76

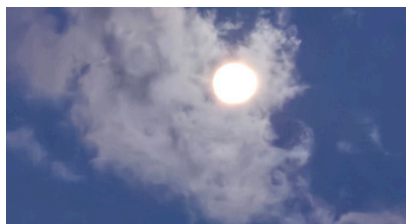
Hi, I am Mary, an alcoholic, member of the Forest-Lakeside Group and your new Newsletter Website Chairperson.

This is your Newsletter. What would you like to see in your Newsletter? My plan is to ask members of District 14 to share on topics for each of Newsletters. If I do not receive enough material I will be using material from our literature.

Your group's members' birthdays will be listed, if I do not receive an **updated** list from your GSR, I will not be able to put your date in the Newsletter.

On the Website side- if your group needs to update anything on the website let me know. If your group is having an anniversary celebration, I can update the Website with this information. If your group is changing the start time or have to cancel your meeting, let me know and I will pass this on to the Webmaster- to make sure everyone knows of your change if they visit the website.

You can reach me at newsletter@asarnialambton.com



1

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol- that our lives had become unmanageable.

Our common welfare should come first ; personal recovery depends on AA unity.



2

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority- a loving God as He may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted ; they do not govern.

3

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand him.

The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking



A GRAPEVINE QUOTE

"Surrender—Not Self-Improvement," Atlanta, Georgia, February 1990, Best of the Grapevine, Volume 3

Want to know how days you have been sober?
Visit aagrapevine.org and see the sobriety calculator.

Want Grapevine Literature?
Speak to our Literature Grapevine chairperson and she will set you up.

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ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SARNIA/LAMBTON DISTRICT 14



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STEPS 1, 2, 3

Steps One, Two, and Three are where I got knocked off my high horse and had to face the truth. Step One is me admitting that I am powerless over alcohol and that my life was completely unmanageable. I hurt people I love, I lost myself, and no matter how many times I swore I'd do better, I couldn't fix it on my own. That's just the truth. Step Two is where I found a sliver of hope when I had none left, believing that something greater than me could restore me to sanity, because the way I was living wasn't sane. Step Three is where I stopped trying to control everything and finally said, "I can't do this my way anymore." I made a decision to trust God, even when I don't fully understand it, because my way led me straight into the ground. These steps remind me that I'm not in charge and honestly, that's a relief. I don't have to carry it all anymore, and I don't have to go back to who I was. I stopped trying to run the show... and that's when I finally became the mom, the woman, and the person I was meant to be. They say the miracle happens when we stop drinking. The miracle for me was when I started living. Through these steps and working them to the best of my ability I have realized that time takes time. If I am open, willing and honest with myself and others, this program works if you work it and the promises are not just a fairy tale. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. I am grateful today and appreciate this life that has been given to me.

Kathleen O.

And acceptance is the answer to *all* my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation—some fact of my life—unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing, happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes.

From - Alcoholics Anonymous pg 417, Fourth edition

Questions

What does this mean to you?

Does this mean I have to accept unacceptable behavior in my life?

How do I find that acceptance?

What other questions come to mind when you read this paragraph in the Big Book?



Have immediate access to local meeting times and locations. Download the **Meeting Guide** app to keep you connected to the program.

Don't Drink & Go To Meetings



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Finding My Place in the Traditions

Reflections on Traditions One, Two, and Three

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about the Traditions. They are an important part of my program and of Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, and I believe they deserve more attention than they sometimes get. I recently had the opportunity to go through the Twelve Traditions with a group of great people, and I learned so much. It reminded me that when the student is ready, the teacher appears.

Tradition One tells us that our common welfare should come first, because personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity. For me, this tradition is about belonging. When I was out drinking, I never felt part of anything—nor did I want to be—unless it involved alcohol. Today, I love being right in the middle of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Unity means getting out of myself and putting our common welfare first. We all play a role in that unity. It's no longer my way; it's our way. That means listening to others, considering their perspectives, and respecting group conscience—even when the decision isn't what I wanted. Through the fellowship, I've learned to be one among many instead of an individual against the world. I've learned how to work with others, to be disciplined and considerate, to admit when I'm wrong, and to move on without resentment. Staying sober allows me to be there for the new or returning person who walks through the door.

Tradition Two reminds us that there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as expressed through our group conscience—and that our leaders are trusted servants, not governors. I've learned that this tradition is about what's right, not who's right. I don't always get this one right. When I become too passionate about service, I can get overheated. I can be an elder statesman most of the time, but I still have moments of being a bleeding deacon.

I'm learning to let go and let God, even in service. I've paid a price for not allowing the process to unfold as it should. As I grow in the program, my hope is to lean more into patience, to appreciate the process newer members are going through, and to trust that things work out exactly as they should when I remove myself and let them happen. Today, I make a conscious effort to watch my responses and continue changing my attitudes.

Tradition Three may be the one I need to remember the most—for myself and for others. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. Thank God for that. When I first came to Alcoholics Anonymous, I wasn't sure I had a drinking problem. I only knew that when I drank, things happened that never would have happened sober. I didn't know when I would stop once I started, or what might happen next.

What I did have was a desire for those things not to happen anymore—and that meant a desire not to pick up a drink. If I had needed to be someone special or meet certain qualifications, I never would have stayed. I didn't know what A.A. was about, but from my very first meeting, I felt welcomed and included. There were no expectations beyond my desire to stop drinking. I am a member when I say I am, and no one can take that away.

Be in Service, Be of Service
Yours In Love and Service
Pam F.



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Welcome to the Concepts!

When I attended my first District Meeting I heard the Concepts read for the first time. Didn't have a clue what on earth they were reading. So, as I usually did, when in doubt, take it back to my Home Group (Forest Lakeside Group). A kind gentleman reminded me of AA's symbol of the triangle and of our Three Legacies - Recovery, Unity and Service. He advised me that Recovery has 12 Steps, Unity has 12 Traditions and Service has 12 Concepts - 36 principles. My Service Sponsor had probably mentioned this to me as well, yes, my Service Sponsor - someone who has traveled the "service road" before me. I was thoroughly intrigued by these 12 Concepts. It did take quite a while for me to comprehend and "see" the concepts in action. If you are new to general service - don't despair- as your service journey continues, more will be revealed!

Bill W. wrote the concepts in 1962. The "short form", which is read at our District Meetings, was approved by the General Service Conference in 1972 and then in 1974 the Conference approved that the short form be included in the Service Manual and also in the Bylaws of the General Service Board. The short form of Concepts I, II and III are as follows:

Concept I: The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Concept II: The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.

Concept III: To ensure 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".

For this article I will be using the long form of each Concept.

Concept I: The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship. A bit of history - with groups popping up all over the Canada and the United States, Bill W. formed the Alcoholic Foundation in 1938. The Foundation, which is now the General Service Board (GSB), would be able to deal with, for example, uniform literature, pleas for help with drinking problems, general information about the Fellowship and shared experience for the new groups forming, just to name a few. The Trustees (nonalcoholic friends) of the Foundation would rely on Bill and Dr. Bob to answer questions that came from the Fellowship. Bill finally realized that he and Dr. Bob would not be around forever, and then who would advise the Trustees? He knew it should be the collective voice of the Fellowship, and he had the idea of a General Service Conference, where representatives of groups (by Delegates) would have their voices heard.

The basis of Concept I is from Tradition Two: For our group purpose there is but ultimate authority - a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants: they do not govern. Bill was very wise when he said that the groups should be in charge. Are we, as a District, ensuring that it is the groups that are in charge. Does your Home Group have a General Service Representative (GSR) that can carry the group conscience to and from the District after a group conscience meeting is held? I know that my group's voice is being heard, and I hope that your group's voice is too. Expanding of where and how your group fits into the service structure continues in Concept II.

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Concepts continued...

Concept II: When, in 1955, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference - excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter - the actual voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society.

Upon completion of Bill writing the Big Book, there were services to be done, to help spread the AA message. In New York City, Bill enlisted the services of some trusted non-alcoholic friends to assist with these services, especially the money matters and our public relations. As stated previously, the Alcoholic Foundation was formed. There needed to be some business management happening. There were finances to look after, letters to be answered, experiences to be shared.

Bill and Dr. Bob realized that the fellowship looked to them for answers, even though there was a Board of Trustees in place. Our co-founders were still the "go to" guys. They were the ones that developed the program. They were the ones the members trusted. The members did not really know this board of trustees. Bill and Bob realized that they were the sole link to the virtually "unknown" trustees.

When they realized that Bob was dying - who would advise the trustees when Bill and Bob were gone? Who would be the link to the Board?

Thousands of groups on one hand and an unknown Board on the other.

Bill and Bob had to devise a plan. And in 1950 the board of trustees agreed that they needed to devise a plan for a conference.

So, the groups would have to get busy as well. The group representatives would need to assemble and elect delegates to be their voice at this Conference - each province, each state. Thousands couldn't converge on New York City. So the groups got busy and elected their delegates. Can you imagine the planning for those first conferences? The plan was for a 5-year trial period. Unfortunately, Dr. Bob died in November of 1950 and could not witness the birth of the 1st conference held in 1951.

The plan: At that 1st conference in 1951 there were 37 delegates and then for the 2nd conference there were 38 delegates, in addition to the 37 - 1st year delegates - total delegates at the 2nd Conference was 75 with each delegate serving a 2-year term. Hence the spirit of rotation and our Panel numbers today. Additional areas have been added since then and today we have 93 delegates meeting with the trustees, directors and staff going over the business for the fellowship.

The plan was for a 5-year trial period and the trial period was up in 1955. At the 20th International Convention in St. Louis, Missouri there was a resolution passed - that would authorize the General Service Conference (GSC) to act for Alcoholics Anonymous and to become the successor to its co-founders.

Obviously the 5-year plan had been a success. What a vision Bill and Bob had. To hand the fellowship over to the fellowship. Amazing. What an exciting time that must have been. They could have handed it over to anyone. To Joe. To Jan. But they had the foresight to let the groups delegate their leadership role to the GSC.

The full resolution, by the way, can be found in the Service Manual (2024-2026 Edition) as Appendix L - page 127.

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Concepts continued...

As previously stated, the Alcoholic Foundation was renamed the General Service Board. The word Foundation stood for charity, and maybe sometimes linked to “big money”. We knew – from lessons learned – that we would pay our expenses ourselves. That we would be self-supporting.

What is an Advisory Action? Along with board reports and presentations, each conference committee (11 + 2 secondary committees) meets and discusses their agenda items and make recommendations to the full conference body.

When a recommendation, whether from a committee or a floor action, is approved in full session with substantial unanimity it becomes an Advisory Action, which becomes binding when approved by the GSB.

At the conclusion of the conference, the GSB meets and approves the Advisory Actions which are then sent to either the appropriate trustees committee, General Service Office (GSO), or one of the corporate boards (AAWS or AA Grapevine) for implementation.

A lot happens at the Conference and an important piece is the reporting back to the areas and districts by the delegate. With many areas now holding preconference assemblies and workshops (live & virtual), members are aware of the agenda items and await the return of their delegate to hear the outcome on these. There will also be a synopsis report in the summer edition of Box 459 as well as the Final Report usually out by August.

The Spirit of the General Service Conference” - Bill W speaking at the 1954 Texas State Convention - “So, since 1951 we have been holding these yearly Conferences, to see whether this movement was interested enough, was responsible enough, felt those services were worthwhile enough, to maintain so long as God will need this society. And I think it’s the conclusion of every delegate who has been there that yes, we should take these things over. So, in 1955 we propose to hold an International Convention, at which time, on behalf of the old-timers, and of Smithy and me, we shall say to you, here is the remainder of your Third Legacy. This Conference shall become our successor. To you we hand the last torch. Carry on. Face your destiny with surety and courage, and God loves you.”

Concept III: As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “Right of Decision”.

Concept III is all about trust – mutual trust at all levels of service. All of us, as Trusted Servants, have the right to decide on all issues or situations, whether it is at your group level, District, Area or Delegates at the Conference, hopefully with a full understanding of the issues and/or situations.

As the Assembly approaches, GSRs will have hopefully reviewed the motions to be discussed at the Assembly with their Group. The GSR is aware of the group’s conscience, however, the group should not “instruct” the GSR how to vote. The Group should give them the “Right of Decision”, especially if further information comes to light. There has to be trust in their trusted servant. That is why they were elected.

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Concepts continued...

Similarly, the Area Assembly should not “instruct” the Delegate. Hopefully the Delegate will be aware of the conscience of the Area, but again, the Delegate will have the “Right of Decision” at the Conference and will report back all decisions made. The Service Manual states it perfectly: “the instructed Delegate who cannot act on his own conscience in a final Conference vote is not a “trusted servant at all”, he is just a messenger”.

In the pamphlet “The Twelve Concepts for World Service” Bill warns against using “The Right of Decision” as an excuse for failure to make the proper reports of actions taken; or for exceeding a clearly defined authority; or for failing to consult the proper people before making an important decision.

The conference itself is not incorporated, but the GSB is, as are AAWS and AAGV. Incorporation of these entities is necessary to carry our policies established by the Conference, handle funds and conduct AA’s business. Because the Conference is not an incorporated body, the GSB is held responsible to the legal requirements defined by New York state for non-profits. The Trustees should also have our trust. They can act on issues and be fully responsible for their actions, however, at times, they could ask the Conference for its guidance, its approval of a recommendation, or for its actual decision and direction.

At the 1955 International Convention, the General Service Conference was designated as the actual voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society. This was done over the objections of those who worried that such a gathering would result in politics, confusion, expense and fruitless strife. Our founders had faith that future generations of A.A. members could effectively take responsibility for maintaining our vital world services.

Every delegate, trustee, director and staff member who serves as a voting member of the General Service Conference is a direct, personal beneficiary of that faith.

Each of us justifies that faith by participation at the Conference in a spirit of fellowship and trust. We are respectful of the committee system which brings matters to the Conference for consideration. We trust that a democratic process engaged in by people acting in good faith will be in the best interest of our Fellowship, even though we may not agree with all of the decisions made. We trust that future Conferences will carry on A.A.’s wonderful legacy of service, just as those who came before us have placed that same trust in us.

“Our entire A.A. program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust. We trust God, we trust A.A., and we trust each other!”

Respectfully submitted,
Jan L.

Past Delegate Panel 54 (2004-2005)
Past Eastern Canada Regional Trustee (2018-2022)



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Thank you to those who contributed to this issue of the Sarnia Lambton AA Update.

If you want to see something in the Newsletter, please let me know.
Contact Mary B via email- newsletter@asarnialambton.com

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**** Please note: Birthday Announcements can only be included in the newsletter if each group's GSR submits an updated list to: newsletter@asarnialambton.com ****

March Birthdays

Jeffrey G Mar 1, 15 Thedford Workshop
Chipper Mar 3, 94 Forest Lakeside
Ian F Mar 12, 24 Forest Lakeside
Jamie 16-Mar 16, 19 Serenity by the Lake
Paul D- Mar 22, 29 Came To Believe

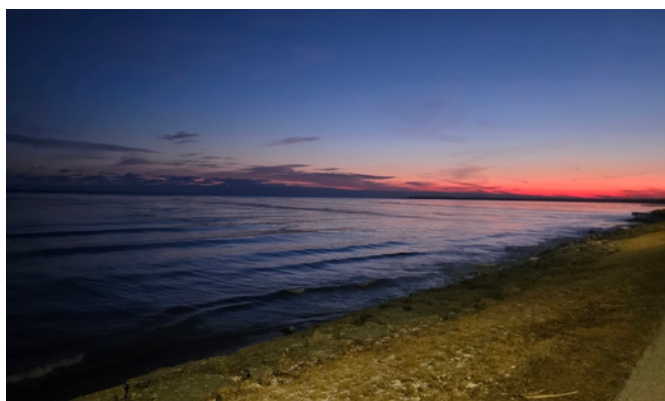


April Birthdays

Jack S. Apr 1, 66 Forest Lakeside
Butch M Apr 1, 78 Hub Group
Rita P Apr 1, 91 A s Bill Sees It
Julie K- April 12, 16 Came To Believe
Line M Apr 6, 03 Forest Lakeside
Mike W Apr 7, 19 Forest Lakeside
Tom D Apr 24, 25 Hub Group
Lynne W Apr 29, 04 Serenity by the Lake

May Birthdays

Bob W May 14, 25 Came To Believe
Ann B May 16, 16 Hub Group
Jack M: May 25, 80 Hub Group
Dylan M May 31, 25 Hub Group
Tony D May 8, 05 Thedford Workshop
Tiffany Z. May 25, 09 Thedford Workshop
Levi May 9, 23 As Bill Sees it
Robin E May 1, 09 Bridgeview



Have immediate access to local meeting times and locations. Download the **Meeting Guide** app to keep you connected to the program.



Don't Drink & Go To Meetings



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Upcoming events- Lambton and Surrounding Districts

Let Grow & Let God
**SPRING FLING
SPAGHETTI LUNCH**
Saturday, April 18
9 am - 4 pm
at
Emmanuel Presbyterian Church
120 Russell St. South, Sarnia
(Parking lot accessible off Russell,
walk around back of church & enter doors off Kathleen)

9 - 10:30 am Registration & Social Time
10:30 am.....Welcome
11 am Al-Anon meeting
Al-Anon Speaker... Eric C. from Sarnia
11:55 am Door Prize #1 draw
12 noon Lunch featuring Spaghetti, Caesar Salad,
Buns & Dessert. Gluten free pasta available.
1 pm Skit
1:30 pm..... Al-Anon Meeting with AA participation
AA Speaker Gudrun M. from London
2:30 pm: Winners announced for:
Door Prize#2, Share the Wealth & Silent Auction

Ticket are \$15. Available in advance or at the door
FREE for ages 12 & under.
Coffee available for 7th tradition. Bottled Water \$1.

Reconnecting...



Saturday, April 25th-Hosted by The Extra Mile Group,
Strathroy (meets Sunday at 7PM at Compass Community Church)

Come
Join us...

Location: Compass Community Church, 405 Drury Lane, Strathroy, ON.

Doors open 12:00 Noon



Speakers

1. AA	Brad S. Lane D.	12:30PM to 1:30PM
2. Al-Anon	Leona B.	2:00PM to 3:00PM
3. AA	Pam F.	3:30PM to 4:30PM

**Stepping Stones
Campout**
Friday, June 19 & Saturday, June 20, 2026
Open AA Event

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Activities begin Friday at 5:00 pm and
end Saturday 10:00 pm.

Includes: Fellowship, Speakers,
Saturday Pig Roast

- Everyone is responsible for their own accommodations including camping fees, park entrance fees or parking.
- To register for camping accommodation, contact
CM Wilson Conservation Area cmwilson@tlvca.ca
Tel: 519 354-8184
- Website: [https://www.lowerthames-conservation.on.ca/
portfolio/c-m-wilson-conservation-area/](https://www.lowerthames-conservation.on.ca/portfolio/c-m-wilson-conservation-area/)
- C.M. Wilson Conservation Area is located in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, at 21799 Fargo Road, Charing Cross. Located 8.5 km south of Chatham.



FRIDAY
Camping Set-up
5:00 Fellowship

Stay Tuned...

Open AA
Campfire Meeting



SATURDAY

AA & Al-Anon Speakers

5:00 pm Dinner
Pig Roast & Beans
For those who purchased a ticket

Stay Tuned...

Bring Your Own
Chair

CHATHAM-KENT ALANON – DISTRICT 9
is celebrating our
70th ANNIVERSARY!

SATURDAY, APRIL 25TH
10:30 AM to 2:00 PM
(Doors open at 10:00 AM)

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
81 Selkirk St., Chatham, ON

Tickets: \$10 at the door
Bring a dish and join us for a Potluck Lunch!

--> Guest Speakers; <--

- ✿ Pam G – Al-Anon
Ridgetown Freedom and Growth
- ✿ Robert L – AA
Chatham Thames Group

✿ 50/50 Draw & Fun Door Prizes!

Let's celebrate 70 years of hope
and recovery together!
Everybody's welcome! ♥

District 14 Sarnia Lambton
ODAAT Campout-
Aug 7 & 8- more information to follow

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One Year Journey ...

My journey to the AA program began in my mid-20s, when I struggled with another substance in the 1990s and went to rehab in Toronto. After that, I stayed sober for about three years. I attended meetings, but I never fully worked the program.

About 28 years ago, I started drinking again. Over time, it progressively got worse, eventually bringing me to a breaking point a little over a year ago while I was working in Windsor. I had been there for about three years, and my drinking was getting worse day by day. After being laid off and then rehired for night shifts, things continued to spiral.

I had rented an apartment in Windsor, but I made the decision not to go to work. Instead, I stayed alone in my apartment, drinking all day and night, not caring about anything or anyone.

My drinking became completely out of control until my wife, sister, and family convinced me to come home on February 28th. From there, I went to detox and then stayed at Ryan's house for the next month.

While at Ryan's, I followed the program and committed to recovery. When I was released to go home, I was told to attend an AA meeting that same day—and I did. I followed that advice by attending 90 meetings in 90 days.

This time, I truly focused on working the 12-step program. I began reading the Big Book with my old sponsor from 26 years ago, whom I reconnected with at an AA meeting in Kingston while visiting my parents.

Yes, my sponsor, set up weekly Zoom meetings where we read and discussed the teachings of the Big Book. I also found my local sponsor Ken P. and a home group, as I was guided to do.

Today, my life is filled with many firsts and a kind of happiness I had forgotten during my addiction. I take things one day at a time.

Through AA, I've met so many great people and built meaningful friendships. Most importantly, my family life continues to improve every single day.

Cory R

Thank you to those who contributed to this issue of the Sarnia Lambton AA Update.

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Don't Drink & Go To Meetings



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