



# Suite 404

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**Step Twelve - "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."**

## **Panic time** Newly sober, his marriage ends—and now a brand new job! What could possibly happen next?

In my first year of sobriety, a lot changed for me. I was not a first-time winner. But for the first time, I felt like I was trying to work some type of a program. As I worked through the Steps, I struggled to repair a failing marriage and serious financial issues. I soon realized that I had to start to accept that it was going to take some time for me to get my life to where I thought it should be.

I continued to listen to people who'd been through what I was dealing with at that time in my life. They helped me to believe that I could get through early sobriety. I began to believe that I had a Higher Power that was working in my life. Shortly after my first year, I decided to leave the marriage I was in. At the very same time, I began a new job. In AA, people suggested that I stay real close to God and my Fellowship. I was living with a lot of change and I was feeling extremely overwhelmed.

Then came my first day at the new job. Getting to know my new boss and job duties caused me such sudden fear. I tried everything I could think of to make it go away. I really didn't want my boss to think I was some kind of nut. So I wandered off and made a few AA phone calls, but I was not able to get anyone on the phone. By this time, my fear had grown into terror. I had never been so afraid. I had always been able to suppress fear before, but not this time.

I began to pace around the shop. I kept doing the next thing my boss told me to do, while inside I prayed and prayed. Later, I was able to call a few more friends, but still no one answered. So I prayed some more.

Then it got to be too much. I was so ready to run and treat the fear the only way I knew would work. But I did not want to go back to drinking. Still, the terror would not go away. My boss even asked me if I was OK!

Then, what seemed like hours later, my phone finally rang. I looked at the incoming number and didn't recognize it. I did not want to answer an unknown number as I was not ready to talk to a stranger and I certainly didn't want to make any amends at this point. But I was so desperate that I answered the call anyway.

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## **Concept XII**

The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

## Tradition Twelve - “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

### Scared to be seen

#### A newcomer gets assured right away about anonymity in AA

At my first meeting I was full of fear and ashamed of being an alcoholic. I would have surrendered several years earlier had it not been for my inflated ego that kept me from accepting the fact that I could no longer drink like a normal person. Alcohol, which had been my friend for the first 10 years of my drinking career, turned into a dangerous enemy during my last five.

Paradoxically, in spite of my low self-esteem, my sick inflated ego tried to tell me at that first meeting that I was somebody special and therefore should look for more appropriate help elsewhere, rather than from a “leper colony.” What if someone spotted me and advised my four remaining clients that their consultant was an alcoholic and not to be trusted? Furthermore, had I during my first weeks in AA heard participants in open AA meetings use last names, I would have used it as an excuse to run away from AA because to stay might lead to my anonymity being broken to the wrong persons.

Somebody at my first meeting, who looked vaguely familiar, buttonholed me before I had time to sneak out. This man, Dennis, had apparently seen me visiting his company and noticed that I looked like I had an alcohol problem. He told me not to worry, that AA would protect my anonymity, and that the members of this group—an open meeting—were mostly white-collar workers who, because of their jobs and status in their community, had to keep their affiliation with AA a well-guarded secret. He informed me that at AA meetings people were told not to break anyone’s anonymity, not even their own. The use of full names could be dangerous for professionals and definitely scare some newcomers away.

At the time I did not know that only a small percentage of first-time visitors actually stay in AA long enough to qualify for their first milestone: a three-month chip. Therefore, hearing full names could send publicity-shy persons back to continue their descent toward alcoholic unhappiness and death. Bill W. in his last message stated that, “The principle of anonymity must remain our primary and enduring safeguard.”

Thanks to Dennis, I joined that group, found a sponsor and got support from his cronies. In the beginning, I needed and received a lot of stroking and positive reinforcement. Eventually, I understood that they did this to teach me that helping other alcoholics would help me to stay sober. My sponsor encouraged me to do service work, but warned me of the temptation to hide behind job titles to avoid working the program. He also pointed out that rigorous honesty with myself, the Steps, and helping others would eventually replace my inflated ego with humility, turn my low self-esteem into self-respect, and lead me to a happy and joyous life.

Some are sicker than others. Early on it was suggested that I seek psychiatric help. So I did. Luckily for me, I found someone who knew our Twelve Step program. He could read me like an open book. He even shocked me by pointing out that my choice of attention-getting neckties made me no different from other newcomers with odd-looking haircuts and bizarre clothes. According to him, such individuals had grown up in varying versions of loveless and dysfunctional homes. Prior to coming to AA we escaped into alcohol to dull our feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. This left a deep hole that craved to be filled with attention and stroking.

A third of a century ago I was told, “It will get better”—and it has. My wife of 24 years and I recently took our cakes together, celebrating 71 years of combined sobriety. Thanks to Alcoholics Anonymous, we live a happy and harmonious life one day at a time. And thank you Dennis, for making me feel safe when I first got here.

—Anonymous

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# Recovery Word Puzzle

W I G K A N E A N  
N I C L A N F A I  
N O D S E I S I C  
T E A M R O C C I D  
G O I N C M I N  
P E A D T R E E S



T A D L I G I  
C L E S I E N  
T I F U N D O N A O  
S H O R I M U N O A  
I N O T M A D E T I  
F L A T N O I F I A I

*Unscramble the letters. Answers to puzzle can be found on page 7.*

**We at Intergroup wish you  
and your families a  
safe, sober, Happy  
Holiday Season, full of  
blessings and much  
prosperity in the New Year!**

*If your Home Group meets  
on a Monday night in a  
Church, and will not be able  
to meet on Christmas Eve,  
please let us know, and plan  
your alternative now.*

*Women's Honesty will not be meeting in  
Hollywood that night.*

## Volunteer Opportunities

**2019 AA's GOT TALENT** next planning meeting is  
at the 101 Club, 700 SW 10th Street, Pompano Beach on  
**Saturday, December 15th at 1:30 PM.**

**2019 INTERGROUP APPRECIATION BANQUET** next planning meeting  
Intergroup Office, 3317 NW 10 Terrace, Suite 404, Ft Lauderdale  
**Tuesday, January 29th at 6 PM**

*Pick up a commitment today!!*

**SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER**



(Continued from page 1)

I said hello. The man's voice on the other side was shaky and sounded scared. He introduced himself and told me that he had gotten my number off the back of a meeting list. He said he felt like drinking. I stood still and listened.

I can't tell you how fast the fear and terror I was going through completely left me. It was immediate. The man and I spoke for about 10 or 15 minutes. I don't remember what I told him nor have I ever heard from him since.

Today, I believe that that man's call was not an accident. I see the call that day as God working in my life. I trust my Higher Power's timing. I have not experienced that overwhelming feeling of terror since that day. I truly believe that phone call saved my life.

I always put my number on the list and call people every day because they might just need to talk. And now I tell people, "God hangs out on the back of a meeting list."

—Sean B., Hamilton, N.J.

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## Multi-Tasking in Meetings

Many years ago, I attended a meeting on the 11th step, which begins with, "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*". The speaker that evening happened to be an ordained Jesuit priest, locally known as Father Bob H.

Father Bob opened up his talk with a general summary of the events of the evening that had just occurred up until the beginning of our meeting. He reminded us how we were all milling around, sipping coffee, chatting about our day, laughing, being silly, telling stories, etc., up until just a few moments before the meeting. As it approached meeting start time, he spoke of how we all settled into our seats and began quieting down a little, until a chairperson rang a bell, or maybe knocked on the table, and announced in very familiar words to most of those assembled: "Could we have a moment of silence please, and follow that with the Serenity Prayer." A meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous is in and of itself a practice in prayer and meditation. We open the meeting with a prayer, which is followed by a meditation, as we collectively focus on our primary purpose: the business of staying sober, sharing and listening to each other, as we express our experience, strength, and hope. Then, we end our meeting with a closing prayer."

I liked what I heard that evening. His message is not in conflict with the Oxford and Cambridge living dictionaries that state the purpose of meditation is to "focus one's mind for a period of time, and the act of giving your attention to only one thing." The one thing is, of course, our primary purpose: to stay sober (and carry the message).

I got sober during the age of the beeper. It seemed that for the most part, those of us important enough to wear a beeper (after we got our jobs back), learned to silence them before the meeting. I was there at the dawn of the cellular phone age. Like the beepers, as we grew to depend on this new technology, most of us learned to silence it, too. One Day at a Time, through the grace of God, and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, I've lived to use and enjoy what may be the digital apex of our culture, the smart phone, and now its extension, the smart watch.

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### **General Service Office, NY**

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212.870.3400

**Bridging The Gap**  
877.207.2242

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954.462.7202

**BCIC**  
P.O. Box 22701  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335

### **Area 15 General Service**

Cary White, PO Box 56  
Sebring, FL 33870

### **District 9 General Service**

P.O. Box 100126  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310



# AA BIRTHDAY'S

## December Celebrants

### Mountain Group

Mark J. ~ 21 yrs.

### Broward Men's

Corey ~ 15 yrs.

Eric L. ~ 15 yrs.

John B. ~ 43 yrs.

### Serenity Altogether

Mike S. ~ 34 yrs.

Paul R. ~ 24 yrs.

### One Day at a Time

Gay M. ~ 29 yrs.

Ernie B. ~ 32 yrs.

### YANA Group

Sarah N. ~ 22 yrs.

Paul W. ~ 14 yrs.

### Women's Honesty

Kirstie ~ 7 yrs.

### Sober Sisters

Alexis ~ 5 yrs.

### Pembroke Pines Last Stand

Suzanne J. ~ 13 yrs.

### Sunlight of the Spirit

Tom J. ~ 30 yrs.

### Meditation at the Rock

Joyce D. ~ 15 yrs.

Joey ~ 20 yrs.

Billy D. ~ 29 yrs.

### Joy of Sobriety

David R. ~ 26 yrs.

### Women's Step by Step

Heather Mc. ~ 5 yrs.

### Other Notables

Dani A. ~ 9 yrs.

Laura F. ~ 19 yrs.

Nancy F. ~ 17 yrs.

Luanne C. ~ 33 yrs.



### JOIN THE BIRTHDAY CLUB!

Celebrate your sobriety by sending \$1 per every year sober to your local Intergroup office to show your gratitude and give back once a year.

*(Birthday listings are not contingent upon contributions...we just like to celebrate sobriety.)*

## November Celebrants - not previously mentioned

### Sunshine Group

Catelin ~ 1 yr.

Ronnie ~ 1 yr.

Henry ~ 2 yrs.

Mikey ~ 4 yrs.

Nancy ~ 6 yrs.

Jay H. ~ 15 yrs.

Dan ~ 31 yrs.

Randy C. ~ 33 yrs.

Sonny ~ 33 yrs.

John ~ 34 yrs.

### Joy of Living

Joe C. ~ 9 yrs.

George F. ~ 13 yrs.

Eduardo W. ~ 7 yrs.

### Express Group

Larry C. ~ 37 yrs.

### B.A.L.L.S.

Scott ~ 6 yrs.

Rick ~ 23 yrs.

### Women's Journey

Mary ~ 14 yrs.

Christine ~ 1 yr.

### Women's Honesty

Mary W. ~ 14 yrs.

### Downtown Dry Dock

Kim M. ~ 14 yrs.

Phyllis ~ 10 yrs.

Leticia ~ 2 yrs.

### Davie Women's

Jewel P. ~ 4 yrs.

Caren L. ~ 30 yrs.

### Victor E.

Morgan R. ~ 10 yrs.

### Let's Do Lunch Bunch

Ray S. ~ 45 yrs.

Steve ~ 8 yrs.

Joseph ~ 3 yrs.

Mike B. ~ 10 yrs.

Willie ~ 11 yrs.

### Bikers in Recovery

Todd S. ~ 28 yrs.

### Surrender is Freedom

Marta ~ 1 yr.

Nancy ~ 19 yrs.

Annie ~ 30 yrs.

### Pompano Beach

Donna S. ~ 32 yrs.

### Perry Street South

Trudy ~ 27 yrs.

### Easier Softer Way

Eddie G. ~ 36 yrs.

### Tamarac Group

Gary L. ~ 21 yrs.

Donna L. ~ 21 yrs.

Jamie M. ~ 24 yrs.

### No. Lauderdale Back to Basics

John S. ~ 18 yrs.

### Other Notables

Maryann J. ~ 18 yrs.

### Vet's in Recovery

Joe K. ~ 22 yrs.

### Noontime Sobriety

Bob C. ~ 5 yrs.

Stephanie H. ~ 30 yrs.

Susan ~ 17 yrs.

Jill ~ 2 yrs.

Leila M. ~ 15 yrs.

### New Life

Ed ~ 24 yrs.

*Things we cannot  
change.....*



*George F.*

*He will be missed.  
May he rest in peace.*

**BCIC - Broward County  
Institutions Committee**

**Next Meeting:**  
December 8 at 10:00 AM

**Twelve Step House**  
205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale

**Next  
Intergroup Meeting**

**Twelve Step House**  
205 S.W. 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Ft. Lauderdale

**SUNDAY, December 16th  
at 1:00 p.m.**



(Continued from page 4)

Many of us learned from our sponsors how healthy it is to arrive early to meetings. As Father Bob noted the night he spoke on prayer and meditation, prior to the meetings, people hang together, "socialize", etc. Not so much anymore, though. Often, I go to my meetings early, and more and more, I notice folks lost in their digital devices. I'm no saint. I've been there; turning my device off as I leave my car, or at least program it to not make any noise or put on any light shows while I'm attending to the business of my meeting. Additionally, I've actually tried to be a little more social prior to the meetings. I look for someone to say hello to who is not tethered to his/her digital device. Maybe there's a newcomer who needs to feel welcomed.

Returning back to Father Bob's message on viewing our actual meetings as a practice in prayer and meditation, an AA meeting is a healing sanctuary, a place of refuge from all the things on the outside, things that in many cases drove us to drink in the first place. Our bodies are occupying a sacred seat in the meeting; some say it is an earned seat, and I tend to share this point of view. However, if our digital devices are online, sitting on the tables face up, or on our wrist, so that each new text, tweet, push notice, call, email, or poke can be discreetly (or not so discreetly) observed, we're not in the meeting. If we are actively using our devices, not only are we not in the meeting, we are being grossly inconsiderate of others, because during our one hour of prayer and meditation, it is our trusted duty to listen to our fellow members, to be there for them, as others were there for us. Furthermore, we may have something to offer: some words of support or wisdom to share that may keep another alcoholic from picking up a drink. Those of us with time know from experience that our disease is "cunning, baffling, powerful" - and patient. We, too, may need to hear something that will keep us sober. After all, our book tells us that "what we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition." Our meetings are where we come together physically for the purpose of fellowship, to nurture our spiritual connectedness, our "conscious contact with God". As Gary Plankton (non-AA) wrote in a post titled, "Turn Off Your F-ing Phone in Meetings": "I honestly don't believe that you can multi-task a spiritual connection." I think Gary may be on the beam with that thought!!!

— Alexander W., Fort Lauderdale, FL



### **Definition of Broward County Intergroup, Inc.**

Your Intergroup office services all groups in the Broward County area. It is not a governing body and does not attempt to, nor can it, rule any AA Group. Its sole purpose is to act as a clearinghouse for the convenience of members and groups desiring assistance, and to extend the Twelve Step Work "carrying the message" to the sick alcoholic. The Intergroup office is supported entirely by contributions from groups, usually a specified amount each month or at intervals throughout the year.

The office purchases and sells all conference-approved books and literature to groups throughout Broward County.

**Faithful Fivers** are A.A. members who donate five dollars (\$5) a month to Intergroup as an act of gratitude. Their generosity helps us to carry the message of A.A. to the still sick and suffering alcoholic throughout the year.

**Thank you to our Faithful Fivers. Your contributions are so appreciated!**

Tom & Liz J., Gregory C., Suzanne J., Bob H., Anonymous I, Elizabeth B., Ron J., Tim S., Lois O., Richard H., Jennifer S., Pat R., Beth D., Craig G., Sandy P., Leo H., Vickie T., Howie K., Kerry W., Lewis G., James H., Joanne D., Gerry B., Don W., Eric P., Tara D., Denise J., Howard S., Bob D., Robert H., Sally S., Anonymous II, Jane T., Fran C., Peter S., Deborah C. and Rachel L.

Please consider becoming a "Faithful Fiver." Your commitment of \$5.00 a month to your Intergroup Office will go a long way toward helping carry the message to the still sick and suffering alcoholic who reaches out. Fill out this form and mail it in with your contribution today!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Sobriety Date and Home Group \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:

Broward County Intergroup, Inc., 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

ANSWERS TO PUZZLE: awakening, financial, decisions, democratic, incoming, desperate, digital, silence, foundation, harmonious, meditation, affiliation.

## I AM RESPONSIBLE....

WHEN ANYONE, ANYWHERE, REACHES OUT FOR HELP,  
I WANT THE HAND OF A.A. ALWAYS TO BE THERE. AND FOR THAT: I AM RESPONSIBLE.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GENDER: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PREFER: VOICE: \_\_\_\_\_ TEXT: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY OF RESIDENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

WILL CALL BACK: \_\_\_\_\_ AND/OR PAY A VISIT: \_\_\_\_\_

AVAILABILITY: MONDAY to FRIDAY: \_\_\_\_\_ WEEKENDS: \_\_\_\_\_

8:00am-12:00pm \_\_\_\_\_ 12:00pm-5:00pm \_\_\_\_\_ 5:00pm-9:00pm \_\_\_\_\_ 9:00pm-8:00am \_\_\_\_\_

TO COMPLETE A 12-STEP CALL, you only need to be sober one day, but you NEVER GO ALONE.  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE! SEND COMPLETED FORM TO: [help@aabroward.org](mailto:help@aabroward.org)



## MEETING CHANGES

### Monday

**Lambda Rising** which meets in Ft.Lauderdale at Lambda South NO LONGER has the Monday night meeting.

**Mommy and Me** which met in Ft. Lauderdale at Christ Community Church NO LONGER meets.

**Life in Recovery** has moved to Zion Lutheran School - chapel, 959 SE 6 Ave., Deerfield Beach. Same time and format.

### Tuesday

**NEW MEETING Serenity of Pompano** 3208 NE 9 St., Pompano Beach, FL. 8 PM, OSPD.

### Thursday

**Then and Now Men's** in Plantation NO LONGER has the Thursday night meeting.

### Saturday

**NEW MEETING The 12 & 12 Study** Wolf Lake Park, 5400 SW 76 Avenue, Davie. 11 AM. OSS.

### DAILY MEETINGS

**Pompano Beach Group has a NEW TARGET DATE FOR MOVING...** January 1

## *Twelve Tips for a Sober, Joyous Holiday Season*

Holiday parties without alcohol may still be a dreary prospect for new A.A.s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober. Here are some tips:

1. Line up extra A.A. activities — meetings, speaking, phone answering.
2. Entertain A.A. friends, especially newcomers.
3. Keep A.A. phone numbers with you at all times—and USE THEM!
4. Find out about special holiday parties, meetings, or other events at groups in your area, and go. If you're shy, take a newer member.
5. Skip drinking occasions you're nervous about. Remember your drinking talent for making excuses? Put it to work for you in sobriety.
6. If you must attend a drinking party, and can't find a fellow A.A. to come with you, keep some candy handy.
7. You don't have to stay late. Plan for an "important date."
8. Go to church. Any Church.
9. Don't sit around brooding. Catch up on reading, letters, walks.
10. Remember, one day at a time. Don't start now to worry about all those "holiday temptations."
11. If you can't give material gifts this year, you can give love.
12. "Having had a ..." You already know the Twelfth Step!

## Upcoming Events

- Dec. 8**     **Winterfest - District 9 SYS event**, Dinner 5:30 PM, Ice Cream Social, Karaoke, Speaker 8 PM NSU, 3200 S University Drive, Terry Bldg. Cafeteria, Davie. Ugly Sweater Contest. \$10 at door
- Dec. 10**    **Annual Women's Honesty Holiday Party** - 7 PM, St. James Episcopal Church, 3329 Wilson St., Hollywood, all women welcome, bring a covered dish to share, dinner, speaker, gifts for guests.
- Dec. 15**    **INTERGROUP OPEN HOUSE** - 9 AM—5 PM, refreshments, door prizes, sales on select items.
- Feb. 2**     **8th Annual AA's Got Talent Show** Coral Springs Charter School, 3205 N University Drive, Coral Springs. Dessert, Coffee, Entertainment. Adults ONLY. 6:00 - 9:00 PM, \$10