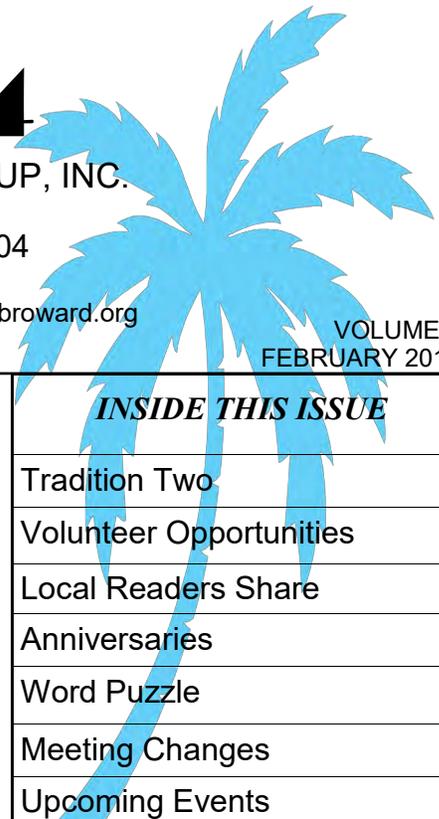


Suite 404

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VOLUME 2
FEBRUARY 2018

Step Two — “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

Sobriety 1-2-3 One of a series of "Beginners' Meetings"--to run from time to time--for newcomers to AA sobriety.

I Now believe that sobriety comes to us one-two-three. Perhaps not quite as fast as we can count it but very likely through the process described in Steps One, Two, and Three of our Suggested Twelve Steps.

At one time I was convinced that sobering up or stopping drinking was a personal, separate thing, which we did in our own way and for our own individual reasons. Then when we had stopped, we looked to AA, its Twelve Steps and its total program for a way of life that would enable us to live successfully without alcohol.

Now I believe and suggest to you that Steps One-Two-Three can truly be considered the sobering up Steps which perhaps many if not all of us followed when we first stopped drinking. This may be true even for those who had not read or heard of the formal written Steps. The procedure was similar. The Steps were written principally as a record of not only the experience of the first hundred in AA but also of all of us who have followed.

A friend of ours, now in Florida, wrote recently on the occasion of his fifth anniversary. He was recalling the day in 1955 when two of us visited his home to take him to a hospital after a binge of many months. He wrote, "I knew I was beaten and was beginning to see there was a chance for me too, if I stopped insisting on getting my own way and let God guide my life." In this sentence we have Steps One-Two-Three all rolled up into one statement. No, he didn't say that he followed Steps One-Two-Three, maybe he hasn't yet realized just what happened. It might even surprise him to know that he wrote an abbreviated version of these Steps in his letter, when he described his recovery.

So, too, is it with so many of us. An older friend who listened to many separate discussions and analyses of Steps One-Two-Three during closed meetings always insisted that he took the first three Steps, all at one time, just as he used to take his booze--one big three ounce drink in one big gulp, not measuring out each ounce or analyzing each part thereof. Some are fortunate! They can benefit from the experience of others.

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol. . . .that our lives had become unmanageable." This, of course, is an essential part of realizing our plight and doing something about it. It is, however, no more important than the other two parts. Considered alone it would leave us powerless in an unmanageable life.

Then, "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." Now we were moving in the right direction and continuing the same thought.

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INTERGROUP BANQUET
TICKETS ARE NOW
AVAILABLE...
Still only \$40
WE MUST HAVE THE
MONEY FOR ALL 10
SEATS IN ORDER TO
RESERVE YOUR TABLE

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.

Tradition Two - “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 servants; they do not govern.”

More Or Less - Does group size matter?

I spent a long time searching for a home group. About eighteen months ago, I stumbled across the Manhattan Kitchen Table Group. It was like no group I had ever seen before. I'd never felt so welcomed anywhere else. When I walked in, people came up to me and introduced themselves. They explained their format, which includes a new topic every week, and handed me a list of topics for upcoming weeks.

I was instantly attracted to them. I could see that they were people who were living in the solution, not the problem.

The Thursday night meeting attracted about forty people and lasted about two hours. Every person got a chance to speak. When I attended other meetings, I bragged about my home group every chance I got. To my surprise, a lot of old-timers and solid AAs had the same response about their experience with Manhattan Kitchen Table meetings: Too long. The mind can only take in what the butt can handle, they said.

One night, at a business meeting, my home group announced our yearly group inventory. I had no idea what they were talking about. My sponsor explained that it was one of the group's strengths. As a group, Manhattan Kitchen Table looks at itself and tries to become better. Members handed out an inventory sheet with questions on it:

What more can the group do to carry the message? Do we emphasize the importance of sponsorship? How effectively? How can we do better? Is everyone given the opportunity to speak at meetings and participate in other group activities? Being mindful that holding office is a great responsibility and not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, do we choose our officers with care? Does the group do its fair share of participation in AA's purpose as related to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service? Is our group aligned with the Twelve Traditions?

I felt a new understanding dawn on me during the meeting. Not only did the inventory help the group, it helped people become part of the group. Not one idea or statement was denied a chance to be heard, and all were addressed. Big decisions were not made at the inventory meeting. Instead, they were read aloud and then voted on at the next business meeting.

The size of our group was brought up at the inventory meeting. Should we split the Manhattan Kitchen Table Group into two groups because of the length of the meetings? This simple question contained a lot of little questions, and every one of them was addressed.

How would we split and at what number? Would we have two chairpersons? When a new person joined, would we still split for a First Step meeting? Mixed emotions about a split were addressed. A good group grows; at some point, if it grows too big, we have to let go and let God, we decided.

At the next business meeting, we voted in favor of the split and worked out the kinks in the new plan. Each week, a different member would give the lead on a topic. Then we would break off into two different groups and discuss that topic.

But if you stick around, the real magic occurs after the meeting. You may see some members clustered about, talking about the program in various corners. A couple of people might walk upstairs to the church and do a Third Step. Others gather and sing "Happy Birthday" to the monthly winners. Most importantly, you see a group of drunks beating this disease for one more day.

-- Kevin K., Diamond, Illinois

Local Readers Share.....

My favorite piece of AA literature is an excerpt from a story at the back of the Big Book on page 417. About half way down the page it states that "Nothing, absolutely nothing, happens in God's world by mistake."

Whenever I am struggling with acceptance of life on life's terms, my sponsor will suggest I read this line for fourteen days as a mantra for prayer and meditation. To me, this line states that I have a bigger God-given purpose to live out. All of the things I have done in my past are not "mistakes", but learning and growing opportunities and lessons.

This passage also helps to clear my mind, and brings me back to center; with it I increase my conscious contact with God and decrease my self-reliance.

— Jason E., Free to Be, Ft. Lauderdale

Volunteer Opportunities

Planning meetings for the upcoming **Spring Fling** hosted by District 9
will be on Wednesdays, February 14th & February 28 at 7 PM
Lester's Diner, 1924 E Atlantic Blvd., Pompano Beach

Tickets available for \$8 when purchased in advance of event.

The Next Planning meeting for the

55th Annual Intergroup Appreciation Banquet

will be held at the Intergroup office, 3317 NW 10 Terrace, Suite 404, Ft. Lauderdale

Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at 6:00 PM

2018 Florida State Convention at FORT LAUDERDALE BEACH

Next Planning Meeting is **Saturday, February 17 at 9 AM**

Broward County Water & WWTF, 2555 W Copans Rd., Bldg. #2, Pompano Beach

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER

Pick up a commitment today!!



(continued from page 1)

"Came to believe. . . ." How truly descriptive of the actual happening. To some, belief came swiftly, perhaps almost as soon as it was suggested or the thought occurred. To others it came later and more slowly. We won't try to ponder why. Time and patience should be an important factor. We will just recognize the facts of life. With all, conditions and circumstances are different. Outside forces and influences plus inner conflict and disturbances have much to do with our individual ability to believe that hope and help can come to us.

Our contribution is to remove the clouds of alcohol, to let the light of belief come through. When we deny ourselves daily a ray of hope appears and the promise of belief shines more brightly.

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." This the third part of a powerful entity. Here we decide that it is not nearly so important to do what we want to do as it is to do what is wanted of us. "Made a decision. . . ." This is the turning point. We are definitely headed in the right direction. Not everything will be smooth from now on but we learn that it is the right road, however bumpy it may be. We decide to make the effort to follow the road which our Creator intended for us.

AA has recorded for us in Steps One-Two-Three, the manner in which many thousands have first become sober. It is a three part recitation of a successful formula.

Could it be that those who are still fighting booze or who thus far have been unable to eliminate it from their lives, are overlooking one or more parts of this formula? Maybe they are using their own unproved method. Perhaps they could follow the old quip, "When all else fails, try following directions." At least it might be well for them to check Steps One-Two-Three to see if their procedure is complete or whether it might be lacking a part or two.

Perhaps for some, a part of this formula may now seem impossible or distasteful. To them we suggest serious, honest consultation with someone who has successfully followed AA's suggestion. Frequent attendance at meetings, plus the practice of as much of the program as is possible to you, may bring success. Steps One-Two-Three are simple, don't complicate them.

You may recall that a certain paragraph contained in the big book *Alcoholics Anonymous* told us that, "Willingness, honesty, and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery."

If we were to transpose these qualifications and rearrange their order to *honesty, open mindedness and willingness*--their initials H-O-W would not only spell out how it is done; how we recover and how we become sober; but also they would be in the same sequences as Steps One-Two-Three.

Not too much imagination is needed to relate Step One to honesty. This was our first effort toward honesty in many years when we finally admitted we were powerless and that our lives were unmanageable.

Step Two calls for an open mind, which permits us to believe that we can be helped, by a Power greater than all of us. An open, receptive mind acknowledges that we are not different; that recovery is possible as it has been for others, if we seek it and accept it. Our long time feeling of hopelessness, discouragement and despair disappear.

Willingness is a most fitting one-word description for Step Three. Our willingness was most evident when we made a decision that eventually enabled us to entrust ourselves and our lives to the care of One more powerful than we. A willingness to be guided, encouraged and led from the destructive errors of our drinking habits has helped many attain sobriety.

Steps One-Two-Three synchronized with honesty, open mindedness and willingness would sound like a tremendous task, were it not for the fact that many thousands have already travelled this path. It becomes possible when we are honestly willing to do what we learn is for our good. We avoid the first drink one day at a time. This we do with the aid of a higher Power and the assistance of the AA program.

—Anonymous

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Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

AA BIRTHDAY'S

February Celebrants

Broward Men's

Brian M. ~ 25 yrs.
Michael ~ 1 yr.
Morgan ~ 5 yrs.

Lunch Bunch

Meko ~ 7 yrs.
Joe ~ 26 yrs.
Franz ~ 7 yrs.
Brad ~ 5 yrs.
Alex ~ 6 yrs.
Steve ~ 8 yrs.

True Self Group

Don B. ~ 33 yrs.
Warren B. ~ 34 yrs.
Steve G. ~ 34 yrs.

East Naples Men's

Richard P. ~ 25 yrs.
Donald M. ~ 17 yrs.

Women's Noontime

Boost
Priscilla M. ~ 16 yrs.

One Day at a Time

Jim R. ~ 61 yrs.

Live Laugh Love

Sherri D. ~ 9 yrs.

Express Group

Diana P. ~ 5 yrs.
Ashley J. ~ 8 yrs.
Reggie J. ~ 8 yrs.
Annie G. ~ 30 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Jessica H. ~ 2 yrs.

Early Risers

Victoria L. ~ 7 yrs.

Melrose Park

George G. ~ 11 yrs.

Each Day a New

Beginning ~ 15 yrs.

Westside Men's

Bob H. ~ 15 yrs.
Greg G. ~ 10 yrs.

Oakland Park Group

Al S. ~ 19 yrs.
Jerry N. ~ 16 yrs.
Mike L. ~ 40 yrs.
Pete B. ~ 30 yrs.
Sandy P. ~ 47 yrs.

Mountain Group

Kathy L. ~ 36 yrs.
Mike J. ~ 32 yrs.

Saturday Morning Awareness

Jon J. ~ 36 yrs.
Ann P. ~ 26 yrs.

Perry Street South

Troy ~ 16 yrs.

Bottomline Group

Joann ~ 36 yrs.

Don't Forget

Jay L. ~ 37 yrs.

Serenity Alltogether

Ernie F. ~ 31 yrs.

**TALENT SHOW
THIS
SATURDAY
DON'T MISS IT
ONLY \$12
AT DOOR**

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.)

BCIC - Broward County Institutions Committee

Next Meeting:

February 10 at 10:00 AM

Twelve Step House

205 SW 23rd Street
Ft. Lauderdale.

Next

Intergroup Meeting

Twelve Step House

205 S.W. 23rd, Ft. Lauderdale

SUNDAY, FEB. 25

at 1:00 p.m.

January Celebrants - not previously mentioned

Spiritual Awakenings

Larry H. ~ 6 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Lori D. ~ 1 yr.
Violet ~ 1 yr.
Bridget ~ 1 yr.
Barbara ~ 4 yrs.

Smell the Coffee

George M. ~ 23 yrs.

Surrender is Freedom

Allen ~ 2 yrs.
Jeff ~ 11 yrs.
Tomas ~ 12 yrs.
Ebony ~ 10 yrs.
Frank ~ 21 yrs.
Fred ~ 32 yrs.
Susan ~ 33 yrs.

Happy Destiny

Arielle ~ 6 yrs.

One Day at a Time

Humberto ~ 4 yrs.
Mena L. ~ 21 yrs. *
Paulette ~ 23 yrs. *

Other Notables

Greg C. ~ 8 yrs.
Deborah H. ~ 22 yrs.

Bikers in Recovery

Mike ~ 9 yrs.
Mikey ~ 20 yrs.
Tommy ~ 2 yrs.
Jorgia ~ 2 yrs.
Shai ~ 7 yrs.
Ovidio ~ 21 yrs.

First Things First

Lucky ~ 3 yrs.
Carole ~ 12 yrs.

* noted last month incorrectly

Let's Do Lunch Bunch

Jordan ~ 3 yrs.
Paul L. ~ 6 yrs.
Josh M. ~ 12 yrs.
John G. ~ 33 yrs.
Coby D. ~ 1 yr.
Duke ~ 29 yrs.

Hollywood Men's

Josh ~ 1 yr.
Vince ~ 11 yrs.

Sobriety thru the Steps

Elyse ~ 7 yrs.
Tammy ~ 2 yrs.
J.C. ~ 1 yr.

Five-3-Zero

Scott ~ 5 yrs.
Doug ~ 3 yrs.

Things we cannot change.....

Judy P - Richard R. - John W.

They will be missed. May they Rest in Peace.

Recovery Word Puzzle

Unscramble the letters. Answers to puzzle can be found on page 7.
Words for this puzzle have been used somewhere else in this edition of Suite 404.

LS R E ES U V O
W E M E S C O R N
 S E E V E R R
 T E F E V I C E F
 F I L S H E M
 Z A P H I M S E E



Unscramble the (red) underlined letters
to fill in the blanks below, and discover
our wish for you...

R U L E T R E A T I
 N O T L U V E R E
 P R O T G R E I N U
 C I E D E I N N O C C
 I N I F T N O D E I
 Y A R T H I B D

!!

There are no coincidences

On November 29, 2017, I attended my first AA meeting at the Twelve Step House in Fort Lauderdale. The fear and apprehension I felt as I drove by and saw what seemed to be at least 200 people outside with a cloud of smoke in the air is indescribable. I knew that I was at the right place, but I had to drive around the block once just to be sure I was really ready to surrender!

I parked and entered into the confines of what would eventually be my home group. I was determined to go to the Wednesday Night Broward Men's group that night, so I entered the front door and took a hard right, not knowing where I was going or what the protocol was. I pretended to be interested in the billboard directly in front of me, but really I just stared aimlessly and acted like I knew what the hell I was doing! I looked to the left and saw a room full of chairs, and a short bearded fellow, and the commonality of facial hair made me gravitate towards him and eventually Step One.

I sat cautiously up against the wall and listened to peoples' stories of strength, hope, and courage. The speaker that night shared a riveting story of perseverance, and when it came time to distribute the chips, I matter-of-factly raised my hand and accepted a white chip, symbolizing the beginning of a journey that I still embrace today, 62 hard fought days later. The same bearded fellow, let's call him Joseph, insisted that I be rewarded with a Big Book, phone list, and a copy of the "Where and When" directory. I acquiesced to his definitive offer of kindness and gratitude.

As I scrolled down the list of names of group members, one name unequivocally stood out to me: Sebastian. His was the longest name in letters and syllables, and it was also the name of the Saint I had chosen for my Confirmation in the Catholic Church. Sebastian is the patron saint of sports, and I am a fanatic of all things athletic.

I snuck out of the meeting directly after the Lord's Prayer and made a v-line directly to my car. As I looked back, I noticed that Joseph just happened to be following me. I proceeded to start my car and pull away, but intuition led me to believe that rolling down my window to see what this stalker wanted was imperative...it was the best breath of fresh air I ever received! Joseph couldn't believe the other group members had let the new guy get out of the door with such ease! He then encouraged me to find a sponsor, and told me that he knew of an individual who was trying to find a sponsee. That individual's name was Sebastian, and Joseph suggested I give him a call the next day to just talk about my decision to walk through those doors that night.

(Continued on page 7)

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., Sherri D., Suzanne J., Bob H., Anonymous I, Elizabeth B., Lillian M., Ron J., Tim S., Milinda B., Barbara S., Lois O., Richard H., Jennifer S., Ted K., June C., Pat R., Beth D., Trent A., Thomas T., Thomas Q., Craig G., Sandy P., Mel K., Leo H., Larry C., Jean G., Vickie T., Howie K., Kerry W., Lewis G., James B., James H., Joanne D., Jim R., Kevin B., Gerry B., Don W., Jamie B., Flemming A., Arthur R., Eric P., Tara D., Nancy S., Joey B., Denise J., Howard S., Bob D., Arielle V., Jay L. and Bonnie T.

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 from page 6: ourselves, newcomers, reserve, effective, Himself, emphasize, literature, volunteer, Intergroup, coincidence, definition, birthday. We love our volunteers!!

(Continued from page 6)

The next day, realizing that the person who had passed out the chips the night before advised people to attend 90 meetings in 90 days, I researched what meeting I was going to attend. A specific meeting at the Sunshine Cathedral really stuck out because I figured since I had attended Cathedral of the Risen Christ in junior high, and the fact that the word "Sunshine" has an incredibly cheery and positive disposition, a connotative allure if you will, that this meeting would probably be a good choice. I telephoned Sebastian after I got home from work, and informed him that Joseph told me to call him, for he felt he would be a good candidate for sponsorship. Unsure of how things worked, I told him my story of despair and battle with alcohol, that things with my home life were incredibly rocky, and that I was going to the Sunshine Cathedral that evening. I asked if he wanted to go there and attend the 7:30 meeting with me. His reply was awesome and he stated, "Are you serious man, did someone tell you?" I inquired as to what exactly he was referring to. He said, "Well Jason, that is my home group and I will absolutely be there!"

After the meeting, there was a "business meeting" for that group, and they read out Sebastian's phone number, because as I found out later, he would be responsible for answering the phones the next month for the Intergroup Relay. In keeping with AA's tradition of anonymity, I will not provide that phone number here, but let's just say the numerology involved had "Higher Power Humor" written all over it. I have continued to keep a daily, detailed record of these "Godisms", for I KNOW that they are not a mistake, but truly represent a power greater than myself hard at work, with a side dish of an immaculate sense of humor. I hope to write a book someday titled "HPH: Higher Power Humor", and have it published as an AA approved piece of literature.

Three weeks into my sobriety, I had the privilege of attending 3 meetings at the AA clubhouse on Penman Road in Jacksonville, where I was visiting my sister. On night 2, the second speaker stated "the teacher appears when the student is ready!" 62 days ago I was willing and ready to stop fighting my addiction to alcohol, and it is no coincidence that Sebastian appeared.

— Jason D.

MEETING CHANGES

Tuesday

NEW MEETING Spread the Word at the West Broward Club, 5625 S. University Drive, Davie at 11 AM. ORF
Eatin' Meeting that met in Oakland Park NO LONGER MEETS.

Wednesday

Primary Purpose BB Study has moved BACK TO the Lutheran Church in Hollywood from the West Broward Club. Time and format remain the same.

Thursday

Then and Now Men's which meets in Plantation on Tuesday has added a day. Same format and place, St. Benedict's Church, 7801 NW 5 Street, 5:30 PM. OBG

Living Young & Sober has moved **AGAIN** from 208 SE 8th Street to the Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23 St., Fort Lauderdale. They will meet in the member's room at 7:30 PM. ORFYP.

Friday

Freedom from Alcohol which meets in Lauderdale by the Sea has made the Friday meeting OPEN.

12 on 2 which met in Oakland Park NO LONGER MEETS.

Saturday

We Rise NO LONGER MEETS at Fellowship Recovery Center, 5400 Atlantic Blvd., Margate.

NEW MEETING Sober Mommy & Me meets at All Saints Catholic Church, 10900 W Oakland Park Blvd. in Sunrise, 11 AM, kids welcome OLT — **THIS IS A NEW TIME**

NEW MEETING The Women's Group meets at the Stirling Room at 3:30 PM, 7331 Davie Road Ext., CDW

NEW MEETING Welcome Home Beginners Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23 St., Ft. Lauderdale, 7 PM. OBG.

Ninth Chapter Our Savior Lutheran School, 8001 NW 5th St. in Grade 1 Room, Plantation. 7:30 PM OSPD

*Please have your group consider donating a gift basket
or a gift certificate for our Intergroup Appreciation
Banquet to be held in April.*

*The basket raffle is a lot of fun and a key element to the
fundraising success of the dinner.*

Thank you.



Upcoming Events

- Mar. 3** **Spring Fling Festival** hosted by District 9. NSU, Terry Bldg., 3200 S. University, Davie. 6 PM, Disco dancing, hot dogs and root beer floats, Tickets \$8 in advance, \$10 at door, Meeting 8 PM.
- Mar. 14-18** **Florida Roundup** - DoubleTree Miami Airport and Convention Center, 11 NW 72nd Avenue, Miami, for more info or to register go to www.floridaroundup.org
- Mar. 16-18** **Soberstock** 3-day weekend of AA/Alanon/Alateen - speakers, bands, meetings, food and fellowship, Camp Brorein, 16901 Boy Scout Rd., Odessa, FL. Registration \$60 per person, by Mar. 10
- Apr. 28** **55th Annual Intergroup Appreciation Dinner**, Tropical Acres, Griffin Rd., Davie, 6-10 PM, Dinner, Raffles, 2 Speakers, 4-course meal \$40. Tickets must be purchased in advance, and do not include raffle tickets. Limited seating. Tables are reserved for 10 or more with payment.
- May 4-6** **19th Spring Into Sobriety Women's Conference** Hotel Venezia Resort in Venice. For more info e-mail womensis@gmail.com or call 941-681-0747. \$30 Advance registration ONLY.
- May 10-13** **40th Big Book Seminar** - in the spirit of Joe & Charlie. Boca Raton Marriott, 5150 Town Center Circle, Boca Raton. \$30 to register. More info at www.bigbookseminar.org