

## Suite 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

Oakland Commerce Center 3317 NW 10<sup>th</sup> Terrace, Suite 404 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

Phone 954-462-7202, 954-462-0265; www.aabrowag



# Step Two — "Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

## How It Feels to Join A. A. Long Before You

**Have to** It was a lovely spring morning last June, warm and full of promise--a day that fills you with love of life and a desire to live it fully, to accomplish all the things you have dreamed, to work, to love your fellow man. It was the first day of my vacation after a busy year--a vacation eagerly planned for and set aside to do a piece of creative work which was a joy to me. The night before there had been a late party to celebrate the finish of the old and the bright beginning of the new. I was shaky that morning, having celebrated thoroughly, so before I started to shop for my new equipment I decided to have a martini or two before lunch. I awoke at twilight with a bewildered sense of loss. The lovely day was gone. A shiver of terror went through me and then the slow, steady creep of smothering panic. Something terrible was the matter with me but WHAT? This wasn't the first time this had happened in spite of my best intentions and plans. It had happened with increasing frequency whenever I was released from responsibility. A cold, damp sweat folded around me like a blanket and I was filled with violent nausea. Later I phoned the liquor store. I had to have a drink so I could think this through clearly.

At the end of a week with days beginning and ending in the same way I was reduced to despair and gibbering panic. I couldn't go out in the street, let alone ride in a bus. I was afraid to get in an elevator. I couldn't sit in a movie for fear of screaming out loud. Safe in the apartment the walls started moving in on me. The long vacation yawned ahead like a dark valley of horror. In my despair I doubted if I'd find myself alive at the end of it, let alone well and ready for work. There was no reality but the fight between me and my panic and the only weapon I knew to fight it with was a drink. I had had psychoanalysis and supposedly should not be suffering this recurrence of panic but it was worse than in its original form. There was no further help to be sought from that angle. Slowly a thought had begun to focus in my terrified mind. Could the panic have any relationship to my drinking?

I didn't believe it for a moment but in my despair I couldn't afford to ignore the possibility. If that were all, then everything was simple. I'd just

stop drinking and things would straighten out.

I hated to stop drinking, of course, because I actually enjoyed everything about it: the taste, the smell and the effect which gave me a sense of well-being, gaiety and courage, for I suffered from an awful shyness and tension with people. Also, liquor had been a daily part of my life for years; helping me through difficulties, being a reward for work well done and a solace when I was depressed. In fact, as I thought about it, liquor was a pretty constant companion in good health and ill, for better or for worse. It went on weekends with me and came home with me. It was waiting for me after work and spent many evenings with me when I should have been following some of my other interests. It frequently went to bed with me and was there in the morning whenever I needed it in the last couple of years. It had lunch with me when it could. It monopolized my vacations because I was carefree. I took it with me where I knew I wouldn't find it. Several times I decided that a temporary vacation would do me good but I never

Tradi n Two 2 Planning Meg 3 5 Anniversarie Word Find 6 7 Faithful F 8 Meeting Changes 8 Upc ng Events

# Your INTERGROUP Office will begin

## SATURDAY HOURS 9 AM — 1 PM

on February 18th for your shopping convenience.

## **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."

## The Chairman — A "LOADED" TOPIC IS DISCUSSED AT THE MID-WEEK GROUP. . .

"SIX months rolls around in a hurry, even 24 hours at a stretch," laughed the Chairman as the Mid-Week Group settled down for the regular closed meeting. "So tonight I have the pleasure of handing over the Mid-Week gavel to our old pal Freddie, who will take on the duties of Chairman for the next six months. . . Good luck and don't let this gang of ex-drunks get you down." The two men shook hands and the installation ceremonies of the new Chairman were ended.

The Chairman had hardly settled himself in his chair when a voice from the back of the room hurled a challenge: "Whatcha goin' t'do 'bout lettin' drunks c'me into yer meetin'? How 'bout that, huh?" The speaker stood up unsteadily but with a warning, Tony promptly pushed him back into his chair, "Shut up or we'll toss you out."

The Chairman lighted a cigarette and said: "I'm glad that this question came up at this particular time. 'Cause I think it would be well to establish some sort of procedure regarding this important--pardon the expression, problem!"

Tony's neighbor mumbled incoherently and the Chairman continued: "Tony, if you can keep your friend quiet, okay. Otherwise I think you'd better take him for a walk. . . Now I'd like to hear some discussion on drunks being admitted to both open and closed meetings." He nodded to Slim.

"What's your idea about this matter, Slim? You've been around AA a long, long time and have participated actively in the group's growing pains."

"My opinion is that any action can be reduced to a matter of doing the greatest good for the greatest number. The First Tradition points out a pretty damn straightforward path to follow. . . Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity. . .

"If we allow drunks to upset the meetings by letting them attend and interrupt our discussions, I can't see where we're helping them or those of us who are sincerely interested in the common welfare, maintaining the unity of the group and advancing our sobriety," said Slim, "If we have to conduct our meeting around the actions and incoherency of one or more drunks, I don't believe we are practicing the principle of 'the greatest good for the greatest number.' "

Scraping of chairs on the floor and an undertone of whispering warned the Chairman that his initial topic was "loaded." The drunk in the rear of the room emphasized this by blurting: "Jus' 'cause a guy gets a li'l stiff, ya don't want nuthin' t' do wit him, huh?" He waved his arms in the air and sneered: "yer jes a bunch of. . ." Tony cut the man's words down to a mumble as he half pulled and pushed him out the door of the meeting room. As the sound of the men's footsteps scuffing down the stairs diminished, the Chairman rapped the table for attention,

"There's nothing like an actual demonstration to prove a point," he said. "But let's try to arrive at some standard practice to prevent similar incidents occurring." He nodded to Ruth. "Go ahead, Ruthie, what's your idea?"

"I know this question arises every so often. But I feel that allowing drunks into the meeting depends upon the type of meeting we're holding. For instance, at a closed meeting like this one tonight, I don't think we should bar a person who's been drinking, providing he behaves himself. But at the open meeting where the public is invited, it is my opinion that we've got to admit anyone who comes to the door, because after all our purpose in holding these public meetings is to make it possible for anyone to learn what Alcoholics Anonymous is about. Of course if a drunk shows signs of breaking up the meeting, then I think he should be taken out. . ."

"I was pretty tight the first meeting I attended," said Frank. "They told me later that I heckled the speakers. But even though they tossed me out, I kept on coming, and eventually I made the ripple."

"You showed a sincere desire to quit drinking, Frank," said Chairman. "The characters we're concerned with are those who persist in coming to meetings, week after week, half in the bag and stick around to mooch coffee and food. A certain percentage of these never will get the program. But who are we to screen them as they come in to meeting? Can we say they will or will not make the grade? Is this in keeping with our tradition of tolerance--of live and let live?" The Chairman nodded to another member signalling for attention. "Okay, Tommy."

"I'll go along with the deal for making the open meetings a free for all. We certainly can't sit in the scorner's seat and hurl the cynic's ban. We invite anyone--and that means anyone--who has an alcoholic problem. Perhaps we do object to mooching and panhandling drunks. They may even drive people away from the open meetings. In fact, I know of groups that have had their attendance cut in half because of the winos and perpetual lushes who hung around the coffee table. . . But at our closed meetings where there are serious minded newcomers, I do believe something should be done about letting drunks attend. I am afraid it might have an effect on a guy or gal who is struggling to get the program."

"Thanks, Tommy," said the Chairman. "There's no doubt that drunks at an open meeting distract from

"Thanks, Tommy," said the Chairman. "There's no doubt that drunks at an open meeting distract from the speakers and make some members of the audience nervous.

But there's no law against ejecting anyone who becomes obnoxious."

The Chairman paused to light a cigarette. "What's your idea, Pete"?

"It seems to me that we're not actually helping the drunk who's been around a long time, and still drinking, by tolerating his appearance at closed meetings. However, if such a person arrives at the meeting, wouldn't it be possible for the Chairman to select someone to sponsor the drinking (continued on Page 4)

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stayed away more than several days.

Generally, it had been a good companion, reliable and restrained for years, especially when I had work to do. It indulged itself on weekends and at parties and plagued me with hang-overs--some pretty bad ones in the last two years, but it had never interfered with a job or made me sick for more than a holiday or Sunday. It hadn't separated me from my friends or landed me in a hospital. My doctor had never discussed it with me, having no reason and my analyst had told me that it was not the factor in my disturbance though it might be wise not to drink so regularly. But now I made up my mind to stop drinking entirely for the rest of my vacation. To my horror I found I couldn't. The decision to do so seemed to enhance terrifically the desire to drink and all I accomplished was to make of myself a battle ground--one part of me fighting to drink and the other part fighting not to drink. The battle lasted one day and that night I got plastered. The victor rode the field for a week in varying degrees of being slightly tight to being drunk. I never passed out but I kept trying through the fog to figure out what in hell had broken loose. One side of me was making a souse out of me with all the symptoms, while the other was reeling around helpless.

Then I remembered reading about A.A. and hearing that a friend of mine had joined. I phoned and went to see her not, of course, telling her the whole story but inquiring about symptoms. She advised attending a meeting, where I behaved like the patient out-side the dentist's office who decides he doesn't have a toothache after all. I fought every identification of myself with alcoholism. I had stopped drinking with no effort after the second meeting and for two weeks I attended every meeting with the sole purpose, I recognize now, of proving to myself that I wasn't an alcoholic. But in that time I read the book several times and began to follow the program. I talked with other members but nowhere could I get what I wanted--a flat, factual statement that I was or was not an alcoholic in their opinion. It seemed that I had to decide for myself with the wealth of knowledge and experience spread before me at meetings, talks and in the literature. Then, suddenly, I had to go away for two weeks and I began to drink again with the friends I was visiting. But something had happened to me. Sometimes I think you get this program through the pores by just going to meetings, being with members and keeping your mind and heart as open as you can. Once you get inside, as my father used to say to us kids: "the Lord has you by the hand!" Something bigger than myself certainly had me by the hand. I stopped drinking with my friends and began the work I had wanted to do--placing my whole problem in the care of the Power greater than myself of which I had heard so much. My mind cleared, an unknown sense of peace quietly took hold of me, my work went well. I humbly followed the 24 hour plan and asked no questions of myself or IT as to what path I was being lead along or what it signified.

That was two months ago. I returned to A.A. so glad to be back and with no inner resistance. Since then I have attended all the meetings that my work permits, have started some 12th step work and have grown to know many people and to depend upon their help and wisdom when I am frightened, troubled or depressed. The panic has gone and I have no desire to drink now though I don't avoid parties and situations where there is drinking. There is a new, fresh interest in my job, an unexpected reserve of material and ideas for it, and an unexpected energy of a different quality--deep, easy and relaxed. Most important of all is a consciousness of a growing experience with a Power outside myself which I depend upon and trust and which takes over for me things which are too much for me--more things than my drinking. All this fills me with awe and a profound gratitude to A.A. for this new and happy life I am living.

- Beatrice

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## **Intergroup Appreciation Banquet -**

Next Planning Meeting is February 15 at Intergroup office 6 PM TICKETS AVAILABLE \$40

District 9 - Spring Fling - Next Planning Meeting Wednesday, February 15 at 7:00 PM Lester's Diner, 250 SR-84, Fort Lauderdale, 33315 TICKETS AVAILABLE \$8 in advance

2018 State Convention - Next Planning Meeting Saturday, February 18 at 1:00 PM Water Treatment Facility, 2555 Copans Road, Pompano Suite 404 welcomes your thoughts and experiences with A.A. We love to run articles written by local people in A.A. so, let us know about your experiences with Alcoholics Anonymous, or in your local home-group. **Contact us at help@aabroward.org** 

### Continued from page 2

visitor during the meeting. Talk to him quietly before the meeting opens, and warn him if he gets out of order, he'll have to leave. If he stays awake he might conceivably get something out of the discussion. This

meeting-sponsor could then take over, and if the guy shows any signs of taking the program seriously, act as his new sponsor, and go to work with the guy to help him get program."

"That sounds sensible, Pete," said the Chairman. "and I'd be willing to go along with that idea and try it out. As far as disturbing the new members, they obviously are so close to the drunk's status that it might act as a lesson. Also, the person who is just off a drunk himself can certainly talk the language of trying-to-getsober effectively than the AA who is several years removed from the throes of a binge."

"I've heard of groups that bar anyone with liquor on his breath," said Marjorie. "Frankly, I don't enjoy sitting alongside someone reeking with booze. And if it affects me after three years' sobriety, what must it do to the person dry a few days?"

"That of course, is your own entitled opinion, Marjorie," smiled the Chairman, who motioned to the back of the room, where Tony and his friend had quietly reentered and taken seats. He explained briefly what had transpired while Tony was away from the meeting. Then Tony spoke up: "I just had a little talk with Duke here, and quieted his nerves with a couple shots. Then he really let his hair down and told me he'd never honestly accepted fact that he is an alcoholic. Still hoped he could drink. He tells me now he's ready to listen. But I warned him that we don't run a rest room for drunks up here. If he wants to sober up, we can help

him. If he insists on getting drunk, that's his business too. But he needn't come back here, insult us."

"Wondrous are the ways of AA," laughed the Chairman. "And welcome, Duke. If you stick to your sponsor Tony, you'll get along okay. . . So my first meeting has ended, but a new responsibility rests on your Chairman's shoulders. . .we'll try to make this ticklish problem resolve itself into the greatest good for the greatest number."

- Anonymous

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## The Intergroup Office will be closed in observance of PRESIDENT'S DAY on Monday, February 20th.

## Suite 404 readers tell us about their personal experiences with AA

## This Too Shall Pass

When I was new in the program, I would hear the members of my group using the same little quotes and phrases all the time. I felt that these little slogans were just annoying at first, but then one of them came true....

I had heard "this too shall pass" stated repeatedly and probably didn't even believe it, but then one day I was so sure I was going to go drink. The ladies in my group said., "OK. Just stay here for this hour, and then you can go drink.

So, I stayed for the hour, and when it passed, and the meeting was over, I no longer wanted to drink. I realized, then, that just because I wanted to drink, didn't mean I had to.

-Bonnie T., Fort Lauderdale, FL—

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

P.O. Box 459 **Grand Central Station** New York, NY 10164-0371 212.870.3400

> **Bridging The Gap** 877.207.2242

Broward Co. Intergroup, Inc. 3317 NW 10th Ave. Suite 404 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309 954.462.7202

**BCIC** P.O. Box 22701 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335 **Area 15 General Service** Cary White, PO Box 56 Sebring, FL 33870

<u>District 9 General Service</u> P.O. Box 100126 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

## February Celebrants

## **Plantation Lunch** Bunch

Brad ~ 4 yrs. Alex ~ 5 yrs. Franz ~ 6 yrs. Meko ~ 6 yrs. Steve ~ 7 yrs. Joe ~ 25 yrs..

## **Express Group**

Annie G. ~ 28 yrs. Ashley J. ~ 7 yrs. Reggie J. ~ 7 yrs. Shannon M. ~ 3 yrs. Dianna P. ~ 4 yrs. John ~ 11 yrs. Gerry B. ~ 3 yrs.

### Westside Men's Bob H. ~ 14 yrs. Greg G. ~ 9 yrs.

**Mountain Group** Tommie D. ~ 56 yrs. Kathy L. ~ 35 yrs.

## East Naples Men's

Mike J. ~ 31 yrs.

Richard P. ~ 24 yrs. Howard M. ~ 5 yrs. Donald M. ~ 16 yrs.

## Live Laugh Love

Sherri D. ~ 8 yrs.

### One Day at a Time Jim R. ~ 60 yrs.

Step Into Sobriety Catherine P. ~ 15 yrs.

### **Women's Noontime Boost**

Priscilla M. ~ 15 yrs.

## **Serenity Alltogether**

Ernie F. ~ 30 yrs.

### Oakland Park

Will R. ~ 12 yrs. Al S. ~ 18 yrs. Jerry N. ~ 15 yrs. Pete B. ~ 29 yrs. Sandy P. ~ 46 yrs. Mike L. ~ 39 yrs.

## **DOES YOUR GROUP** HAVE A LIST OF **MEMBER'S ANNIVERSARIES?** SHARE IT WITH US, SO **WE CAN HELP YOU CELEBRATE DURING** YOUR SPECIAL MONTH!

## January Celebrants-not previously mentioned

### Living in the Solution

Tony ~ 1 yr. Betsy ~ 2 yrs. Greg ~ 2 yrs. Sonia ~ 27 yrs. Erica ~ 3 yrs. Eileen ~ 12 yrs. Clay ~ 22 yrs. Judi ~ 15 yrs. Kurt ~ 2 yrs. Keith ~ 4 yrs.

Nancy F. ~ 16 yrs. Heidi ~ 20 yrs.

### **Touchstones**

Jamie B. ~ 5 yrs.

## Serenity Alltogether

George M. ~ 22 yrs.

### Women's Honesty

Regina H. ~ 23 yrs. Kelly T. ~ 14 yrs.

## **Imperial Point Friday**

Night

Stu S. ~ 5 yrs.

### **Correction to January's Celebrants:**

Deborah H. (12 & 12 Group) ~ 21 yrs. (not 20)



## The Mountain Group

will be meeting at **Pathways to Hope** during the month of **February ONLY.** 

The address there is 600 SE 2nd Ct, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

## **BCIC** Broward County **Institutions Committee**

**Next Meeting:** February 11<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m. at the Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale.

## **Upcoming Intergroup Meetings:**

The Twelve Step House 205 S.W. 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ft. Lauderdale, February 12 and March 19 at 1:00 p.m.

## Recovery Word Find

XSERVANTY L UI M
TRUSTE DT I MERV
SECDJL I VMBORD
SDAYCRECOVERY
JAPCONSCIENCE
LEMHONESTXEOR
ULT I MATESPSNO
GUOGFOJNLROCM
AGOVERNOMEPES
STE L I VESYSR PN
AOTHINKYPSUTER
STUHLKGROUPSM

Words can be found going down, across or diagonally forward or backward...

**HONEST TRUSTED SERVANT LEADERS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY LOVING GROUP** THINK ONE **JOY EXPRESS** RECOVERY **CONSCIENCE PURPOSE GOVERN** TIME **CONCEPTS** DAY LIVE



## **SEE YOU THIS SATURDAY....**

## 6th Annual AA's Got Talent \$10 at door

6:00 - 10:00 PM

Coral Springs Charter School
3205 N University Drive, Coral Springs 33065

Corner of Sample and University, no entrance or parking on Sample Road side of building

## **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. and maybe YOU next time?

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!

It is the still suffering alcoholic who ultimately benefits from your generous spirit!

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

## Thíngs we cannot change... Helene L.

She will be missed by all who knew her.

# NEW WHERE & WHENS ARE IN! PLEASE CHECK YOUR GROUP FOR LISTING ACCURACY.

## WE ARE FOREVER GRATEFUL

to the groups and individuals who have made generous financial contributions to Broward County Intergroup, or volunteer their time to help the sick and suffering alcoholic.

**WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!!** 

## **MEETING CHANGES**

### Monday

<u>Fort Lauderdale Primary Purpose Big Book Study Group,</u> 7:15p.m in Ft Lauderdale has Moved to First Presbyterian Church, Nuemann Center Bldg. 401 SE 15th Ave., Fort Lauderdale, FL. 33301

### **Thursday**

<u>Alcoholics and God,</u> 7:15p.m. in Ft. Lauderdale **has Moved to** First Presbyterian Church, Nuemann Center Bldg. 401 SE 15th Ave., Fort Lauderdale, FL. 33301

Practice These Principles, Margate has added a Thursday meeting at 6 PM. Open Double Speaker.

### **Daily Meetings**

<u>Victor E.</u> 8:30a.m., Monday—Saturday in Ft. Lauderdale **has Moved to** Metropolitan Community Church, Room 1 upstairs, 1480 SW 9th Ave., Fort Lauderdale, FL. 33315

## Do you love Raffles ?!

We are looking for groups that would like to contribute a basket of goods or any other gift item to be raffled off at our 54th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, April 22nd





This year you will put your tickets right into the box that corresponds with the gift of your choice.

## **Upcoming Events**

- **Feb. 4 6th Annual AAs Got Talent,** Coral Springs Charter School, 3205 North University Dr. Coral Springs. Tickets \$10.00 Adults only. Coffee and desserts! 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM
- Feb. 18 3rd Annual Florida AA Archives Workshop, 9AM-5PM Winter Park, FL..Registration
  - **19** \$15, includes lunch. Questions? 813.597.1655 or flarchivesworkshop@gmail.com
- Feb. 24 14th Annual Steps to Sobriety, Indian Rocks Beach, FL Registration \$25, work-
  - 25 shops, door prizes, raffles, food. For more info go to www.stepstosobriety.com
- March 4 District 9's Spring Fling, 50's Dance & Dress up, NSU Campus, 3200 S. University Dr., Terry Bldg., Davie, Chili Dinner 6:00 PM Speaker 8:15 PM...Tickets \$10 at door.
- Mar. 17- SoberStock 2017, Camp Brorein, 16901 Boy Scout Rd., Odessa, FL.
  - **19** Three days of speakers, meetings, bands, food & fellowship. Weekend \$40.00 per person, \$50.00 at the gate. For more info go to www.soberstock.com.
- Mar. 15- Florida Roundup 2017, The Deauville Beach Resort, 6701 Collins Avenue, Miami
  - **19** 33141. Registration \$70.00, For more info, or to register, go to: floridaroundup.org.
- **Apr. 7-9 South Florida Area 15 Qtly Assembly -** Boca Marriott free service event with workshops and speakers. For more info go to www.area15aa.org
- **April 22 54th Annual Intergroup Appreciation Banquet**, Tropical Acres Steak House, 2500 Griffin Rd., Ft. Lauderdale. 6:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Dinner, Speaker, raffles. \$40.00 per person. Call to reserve a table. Tickets are now available and may be purchased with a CC by calling the Intergroup office.