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VOLUME 7
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Step Seven— *"Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."*

Step Seven: Food For The Journey Humility lends an AA new strength

I used to draw a blank when I heard the word "humility." Or perhaps not a blank so much as confusion. For me, to be humble was to have, as one dictionary put it, "a feeling of inferiority and insignificance," to feel inadequate and unworthy. The dictionary linked being humble with being humiliated, which in turn pointed to being dishonored, disgraced, and shamed. Its synonyms included "meekness," "submissiveness," and "lowliness."

I didn't want humility! Shame and feelings of inferiority haunted me not only in active alcoholism but even before, in a childhood marked by various forms of abuse and neglect. I was the kid who failed in sports, a member of the out-group, and a loner who would lose himself in a book because he couldn't fit in with the guys. In a couple of places, the Big Book spoke of the importance of ego-deflation. I understood that there were people with a grandiose opinion of themselves who could profit from a good helping of ego-deflation--but I came to the rooms feeling empty and unworthy.

So, even though Step Seven began with the word "humbly," to me, humility did not seem to be of any great importance to recovery. In the first 164 pages of the Big Book, humility and being humble are mentioned only a handful of times.

Many people, I suspect, have come into AA sharing my idea of what humility is, or at least something close to it. And, it did not seem to be a preferred topic for discussion in the meetings I attended. On those rare occasions when the topic did come up (usually when the discussion was about Step Seven), people often spoke about some event in their lives that made them feel inferior or foolish in front of others. Most of the time, humility was seen as humiliation. Occasionally, it was linked to gratitude.

At one meeting, a man spoke eloquently about how he had gotten his family, job, and self-respect back; his health, wealth, and a cluster of good friends--all of which made him feel "humbled." To me, it sounded more like gratitude.

Something was missing; or rather, I was missing something. In the "Twelve and Twelve," the whole emphasis of the Step is on humility. Bill W. wrote that it is "a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be." It is "a healer of pain" and "the avenue to the true freedom of the spirit," which can bring us to a "great turning point in our lives." In fact, he continued, "the attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of AA's Twelve Steps." There is no "humble pie" or "groveling despair" in any of this!

Bill's reflections represented humility in a way that was vastly different from what I had originally thought, but I was still puzzled.

(continued on page 4)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Tradition Seven	2
Volunteer Opportunities	3
Local Readers Share	3
Anniversaries	5
Word Scramble	6
Meeting Changes	8
Upcoming Events	8

Are you registered for
the State Convention?
If you would like to
volunteer to help sell
books at the
Intergroup table that
week, please call the
office. Thanks

Concept VII

The Charter and Bylaws
of the General Service
Board are legal
instruments, empowering
the trustees to manage
and conduct world
service affairs.

The Conference Charter
is not a legal document;
it relies upon tradition
and the A.A. purse for
final effectiveness.

Tradition Seven- "Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

Basket case - A former binge drinker contributes more to his group's Seventh Tradition collection, and doesn't hide it

I HAVE yet to be at a meeting that didn't pass the basket. It has come at different moments during the meetings but it has always come. In most meetings the first line of the Seventh Tradition is read as a brief explanation of the purpose of the expectation: "Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting. . . ." However, it does not say AA groups should be struggling for financial survival, as is happening currently to one of the largest and most influential groups in my area.

When I last joined AA, 21 years ago, everyone was dropping a dollar in the basket. No amount was mentioned or suggested; it just seemed that the most common rate was a buck. In the last decade or so some groups have taken to making a suggestion of \$1 and, more recently, \$2.

I recall that when one small group I regularly attended was going to adopt the suggestion of \$2, I'd argued against it. I had some idea that those who couldn't give that much would be embarrassed by such a suggestion. I now have more time, more experience, more security, more sobriety and perhaps a bit more wisdom, and now I feel foolish for the objection.

In the last couple of years, I have reconsidered my position on the basket and the amounts. I have realized that I had been stingy. Here's my newer thinking: If I had been drinking on any given day, I would have surely spent more on alcohol than a dollar or two. Even as the binge drinker that I was, I had a daily average that was several dollars higher than the current Seventh Tradition suggestions. So, I have been thinking that if I paid more than \$2 to poison myself, soul and body, why am I being so stingy with paying for my sobriety? Hmm.

Well, then, how much should I toss into the basket? I tipped the last waiter who served me \$9 to do little more than carry a piece of paper to the chef and a couple of plates to my table. That was more than the \$2 suggestion and far less important to my life. I've paid more for frivolous purchases than two dollars. Why have I been so tight with money for the basket? Don't know.

One week I started to give what my last restaurant tip was, but that seemed a bit high. Then I decided to put in the current price of one bar drink. Heck, that's not so much to pay for sobriety.

I've tossed in a five or a 10 or a 20 (that's been my maximum) and I had this wonderful sensation. I told myself that perhaps I had covered for those poorer souls who couldn't give a buck. I reminded myself that the rent on the clubroom had surely risen over the two decades of my sobriety. I reminded my wife that she would surely have left me had the same amounts been poured down my throat. I felt really pleased--perhaps a bit too pleased--with myself.

I began to wrestle with a couple of small ego issues. Just how good should I feel about this giving? Just how public should I be with it? Should I tell myself that I am so wonderful and generous that I should be honored? Sure disaster, that, for an alcoholic. Should I allow others to see that I am giving more than the suggested amounts? Would that be self-serving? Even this article has risks.

Well, this past fall I attended a gratitude dinner/fundraiser in my area and the person with the most sober time was the keynote speaker. Among all of the wise and humorous remarks she made, she touched on donations and brought up the same idea of giving what your last drink cost. I felt relieved that I wasn't the only one to arrive at this notion. I would only have added to her remarks that with 40-plus years, her last drink was a lot cheaper than one drunk by someone recently sober.

So, here's what I have concluded. We all might reconsider how long we've been giving the same dollar (or two) and how much the costs to AA groups have risen. Perhaps we all could consider giving at least the current cost of one of the drinks we would have drunk had we not joined Alcoholics Anonymous and taken up sober living. Not only will it benefit the groups' survival, thus helping other alcoholics find our path, but it will also provide an inner warmth without the drink. I suggest trying just once to give the cost of a drink and see what that does.

By the way, I have decided that I would not fold the higher bills but allow whomever might notice to do so. Perhaps it will serve as a model and attract others to donate the same, and I'll keep trying not to feel too good about it.

Local Readers Share.....

Intergroup 911

Henry Kissinger once said, "If you don't know where you are going, every road will get you nowhere.

I was the living proof of that quote in 2005. It was the year I decided to leave my home, my family and dignity behind, only to chase after the girl I thought was the dream of my life. She wasn't the centerfold model type, but in my eyes, I had arrived. She was the one who could fix me – give me everything a drink couldn't; or so I thought.

I have a somewhat foggy memory of the cold February Chicago morning and the taxi ride to the airport, because Jack and I had spent the night together and the morning bottle had to be emptied. What alcoholic wastes his favorite beverage. The plane ride might have been rough, but in my condition, I remember it as quick, painless and uneventful. Chicago was a 40-year memory blur and I was leaving for the first time. Bottle in hand and self will run riot, I was following the path that suited me just fine.

Two years later, I sat in the apartment my fiancé and I shared, getting ready to go into the job that I was struggling to keep on the night shift. Then, without warning, my dream girl told me she didn't want to continue our relationship. How could anyone not want me? I didn't understand. In fact, I told her to sleep on it and we'd talk in the morning.

That morning never came and I soon found myself diving headlong into the bottle like never before. Days turned into weeks, and the following month I went on a weekend trip to visit my son. While I was gone, she and her new boyfriend came to the apartment and moved her things out. I returned to an empty apartment and fell on my knees, crying deeply. I had never felt so much pain.

I had not only lost my dream, but also any dignity and self-respect I thought I had at the time. Without even thinking, I ran for the bottle we had in the closet. Several drinks later, I called home. The same home I had left two years before. My 9-year old son answered and detecting my slurred speech and unusual behavior, he handed the phone to his mom.

She was confused as to why I was calling so early, so drunk. "You just left on the flight this morning. How can you be drunk in mid-day and what is wrong with you?"

I apologized for everything but spilled out what happened. I also stated that I wanted to end my life. It wasn't worth anything now!

Volunteer Opportunities

2018 DISTRICT 9 SPAGHETTI DINNER to be held in September

has two planning meetings in July at Skyline Chili, 2834 N University Drive in Sunrise.

July 11 from 7-8 PM and **July 25 from 7-8 PM**

2018 DISTRICT 9 GRATITUDE DINNER to be held in November

will have their next planning meeting at the 441 Group, 1452 N State Rd. 7, Margate on

Sunday, July 29 at 1:30 PM

2018 Florida State Convention at **FORT LAUDERDALE BEACH**

Next Planning Meeting is **Saturday, July 21st at 9 AM**

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

Pick up a commitment today!!

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



(continued from page 1)

How exactly was humility linked to self-recognition? How could it heal pain or bring spiritual freedom? How could it be "the foundation principle" of all the Steps? I had already been through the Steps a couple of times, but I wasn't aware of humility being a part of each of them. I later realized that humility-as-humiliation was still clouding my thinking.

Then there was the day that the meeting focused on powerlessness. A teenage son was acting up, rebelling, drinking and doing drugs; his mother was desperately trying to control him. But despite her efforts, his behavior had not changed. It was obvious to many that nothing she could do would change him. It was a contest of wills and she was losing.

I remembered my own troubles with my youngest son, who had severed relations with me long after I had sobered up. None of my efforts could win him back. I spent hours with my sponsor being reminded that I was powerless over other people, hours in which he encouraged me to work on myself and to focus on staying open to my son, ready to welcome him into my life after he had found his own way back to me.

My futile attempts to bring about what was beyond my power had brought me only anger and frustration, the very pain the woman at the meeting was suffering over her son. It was then that I had a sudden moment of clarity. Humility is not humiliation, though humiliation could bring us to it. It was not gratitude, though humility could bring us gratitude. For me, humility relates to power: it is the recognition and acceptance of the limits of my own power. I therefore began to understand that humility was indeed the foundation of all the Steps, and so could be a healer of pain, a way to spiritual freedom, and a turning point in our lives.

Each of the Steps asks humility of us. It was grudging humility, but humility nevertheless, that led me to seek help for my alcoholism: a turning point in my life. It was humility that led me to ask someone to sponsor me. And it is humility that keeps me going to meetings. Each of these actions is saying, "I need your help." As a result, my healing progresses. It is humility when I ask my sponsor and others for help in seeing myself as I really am, an important beginning of spiritual freedom from my defects. It is humility when I allow myself to be taught how to make amends, thereby healing damaged relationships. It is humility again when I call on God to relieve me of my defects, to show me his will, and to empower me to do it. I turn to others for strength to bear the pain, sorrow, and disappointment that are an inevitable part of all human lives. Each of these is a way of saying that, on my own, I could not do those things that are so necessary for my spiritual growth. This is why we say, "This is a 'we' program."

The simple word "we" stands at the entrance to the Steps, reminding me that my power is limited. It reminds me that it is through God's help and the help of others that I gain the strength to work toward the spiritual awakening that is the final goal of the Twelve Steps. "We" begins our journey; humility is the food that strengthens us on our way.

-- Jamie C., West Henrietta, New York

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AA BIRTHDAY'S

July Celebrants

Broward Men's

Jay ~ 2 yrs.
Joh ~ 2 yrs.
Bill ~ 2 yrs.
Richard ~ 2 yrs.
Steve ~ 1 yr.
Joe A. ~ 3 yrs.

Happy Destiny

Liz A. ~ 10 yrs.
Sharon S. ~ 9 yrs.

Women's Honesty

Marcia S. ~ 22 yrs.
Becky P. ~ 36 yrs.
Mary S. ~ 19 yrs.
E.J. ~ 29 yrs.

Serenity Altogether

Fred L. ~ 38 yrs.
Doug C. ~ 26 yrs.
Ken M. ~ 12 yrs.

Open Arms

Peter ~ 27 yrs.

B.A.L.L.S.

Elias G. ~ 15 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Dodie S. ~ 27 yrs.

Men in Recovery

Harry O. ~ 28 yrs.

Rule 62

Vickie T. ~ 32 yrs.

Northeast Group

Richard H. ~ 38 yrs.

Bikers in Recovery

Emilio S. ~ 19 yrs.

Meeting in Print

Rhonda D. ~ 14 yrs.

Women's Step by Step

Karen V. ~ 37 yrs.

Live, Laugh, Love

Leslie B. ~ 10 yrs.

Mountain Group

Carole G. ~ 28 yrs.
Denis H. ~ 44 yrs.

Other Notables

Bill F. ~ 27 yrs.
Liz J. ~ 29 yrs.
Linette K. ~ 6 yrs.

Surrender is Freedom

Diane R. ~ 30 yrs.

Friends of Pat C.

Mare C. ~ 21 yrs.

Ft. Lauderdale Women's

Nancy B. ~ 29 yrs.

Pompano Beginners

Randy M. ~ 11 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.)

HUMILITY

Noun (hu-mil-i-ty): hyü-'mi-lə-tē

Definition: freedom from pride or arrogance; the quality or state of being humble.

Merriam-Webster

The principle behind the 7th Step.

June Celebrants – not previously mentioned

Let's Do Lunch

Hani ~ 1 yr.
Rick A. ~ 2 yrs.
Burt B. ~ 28 yrs.
Ilene ~ 5 yrs.

441 Group

Jill W. ~ 10 yrs.

Other Notables

Stan A. ~ 31 yrs.

Coral Springs Men's

Harvey B. ~ 9 yrs.

Surrender is Freedom

David P. ~ 4 yrs.
Jay S. ~ 12 yrs.

Women's Journey

Carole ~ 12 yrs.
Ebony ~ 10 yrs.

5-3-Zero

Jeff ~ 3 yrs.
Papi ~ 3 yrs.
Rachel J. ~ 6 yrs.

Big Book Friday Night

Randy M. ~ 9 yrs.

Sobriety Thru the Steps

Tim ~ 8 yrs.

Oakland Park

Gene S. ~ 9 yrs.
Tom M. ~ 34 yrs.
Jamie C. ~ 1 yr.

Pride 5:45

Jack C. ~ 31 yrs.

YANA

Mark ~ 3 yrs.
Ed ~ 33 yrs.
Cindy ~ 3 yrs.
Ruth ~ 25 yrs.
Phil K. ~ 39 yrs.
David ~ 28 yrs.
Julene ~ 1 yr.
Bill ~ 4 yrs.
Telys ~ 7 yrs.



BCIC - Broward County Institutions Committee

Next Meeting:

July 14 at 10:00 AM

Twelve Step House

205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale

Next

Intergroup Meeting

Twelve Step House

205 S.W. 23rd, Ft. Lauderdale

SUNDAY, July 22 at 1:00 p.m.

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.

**STUNRICEBOT
DINGESOAR
GROPEMENIW
MODETUCN
DOONFTANUI
RUGSNEEO**



**PUGTRIOREN
VEERCIS
DEEPNINNCEED
TINIHOMEULAI
TRASHYBID
TONEDIIFNI**

(continued from page 3)

After trying to calm me down, we got disconnected or she hung up on me. I can't quite remember, but the latter seems to be more accurate.

I don't know if I looked in the phone book or dialed 411, but the next voice I heard was the soothing sound of a young lady from Alcoholics Anonymous. I hadn't been introduced to Intergroup before, and I just thought it was the office of the nearby AA group. I now realize it was the Intergroup telephone relay volunteer. We talked for an hour and somehow I must have mentioned to her that I was ready to end my life, and had a gun in the apartment, because several minutes later, I heard a knock on the door and a man shouted, "Police. Open the door!!!"

It was the best thing that ever happened to me. I was escorted into a police car, with guns drawn, and taken to a nearby hospital. I vaguely remember going through detox for the 5th time in my drinking career.

Miraculously, days later, I found myself at a nearby AA Meeting picking up one of several white chips. That chip continued my journey of sobriety to where I am today. I don't remember the name of that girl who answered the phone for Intergroup, and I have no idea what we talked about. I do know that only by the grace of God, and the help of Alcoholics Anonymous, I'm here today giving back what was so graciously given to me. Thank you Ms Volunteer, wherever you are. I want you to know your service, not only saved my life, but the lives I have been able to touch with the message of AA, from the gift that God gave me.

— John G., Hollywood, FL



Things we cannot change.....

Flash (Pride) and Larry (101 Club)

They will be missed. May they Rest in Peace.

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., Bonnie T., Sally S. and the Women's Step by Step Group.

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: contributes, grandiose, empowering, document, foundation, generous, intergroup, service, independence, humiliation, birthdays, definition

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER...



Tradition Seven: Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

1. Honestly now, do I do all I can to help AA (my group, my central office, my GSO) remain self-supporting? Could I put a little more into the basket on behalf of the new guy who can't afford it yet? How generous was I when tanked in a barroom?
2. Should the Grapevine sell advertising space to book publishers and drug companies, so it could make a big profit and become a bigger magazine, in full color, at a cheaper price per copy?
3. If GSO runs short of funds some year, wouldn't it be okay to let the government subsidize AA groups in hospitals and prisons?
4. Is it more important to get a big AA collection from a few people, or a smaller collection in which more members participate?
5. Is a group treasurer's report unimportant AA business? How does the treasurer feel about it?
6. How important in my recovery is the feeling of self-respect, rather than the feeling of being always under obligation for charity received?



Taken from the Traditions Checklist
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MEETING CHANGES

Monday

90 & 90 which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Tuesday

Crossroads which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Reflections for Tomorrow which met at St. Francis Community Center, Ft. Lauderdale NO LONGER MEETS.

Wednesday

Sharing Your Experience which met at Lambda South in Fort Lauderdale NO LONGER MEETS.

Thursday

New Life Beginners which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Atlantic Group has MOVED AGAIN. It now meets at Christ Community Church, 901 E McNab Rd., Pompano Beach at 7:30 PM.

Friday

Happy Hour Sobriety which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Saturday

Candlelight Meditation which met at the Porch in Hollywood now meets at 4th Dimension, 8:30 PM. OM.

Saturday Nite Live Steps at the 4th Dimension Club in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

DAILY MEETINGS

Downtown Drydock which meets at The Sanctuary in Ft. Lauderdale will now only have 1 meeting on every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Monday and Friday schedules remain the same.

***** **WEST BROWARD CLUB IS MOVING AGAIN—ALL GROUPS LISTED** *****
***** **AT THAT ADDRESS HAVE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED THE MEETINGS** *****

Your Intergroup Bookstore

will be closed in observance of Independence Day

on Wednesday, July 4th, 2018.

Thank you all for your continued support!

Upcoming Events

- July 6-8** **South Florida Area 15 Quarterly Assembly** Marriott Tampa Airport, 4200 George J. Bean Parkway, Tampa, FL 33607
- Aug. 4** **Carry the Message Day** NSU, 3200 S. University Drive, Davie, FL **free service event** with a \$5 continental breakfast at 8 AM, for those that want to eat first. Panel discussions from Intergroup, General Service and Institution committees with a Q & A workshop. Terry Building cafeteria / auditorium. This event is presented for the benefit of educating and getting newcomers introduced to the many different opportunities we have for service here in Broward County.
- Aug. 15-19** **62nd Florida State Convention** Harbor Beach Marriott, 3030 Holiday Drive, Ft. Lauderdale 33316, off-site parking \$5 per day with shuttle service provided, workshops, speakers, fellowship. For more information on hotel, making dinner reservations or purchasing convention merchandise go to www.floridastateconvention.com. Beautiful beachfront resort and spa!
- Sept. 8** **District 9 Spaghetti Dinner** NSU, 3200 S. University Drive, Davie, FL in the Terry Building, cafeteria. Dinner at 5:30, Dessert contest. Prizes given to top 3. Tickets \$8 in advance, \$10 at door. Feature movie at 6:15 in Steele Auditorium: "My Name is Bill W." Bring a newcomer and a dessert.