



# Suite 404

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## Step Three - “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.”

### THE LOVE OF MY LIFE After yet another broken heart, she finally did a Third Step and found what she was looking for

Believe it or not, my own story about dating in sobriety is right there in our literature. In the Big Book, it says, “But it is clear that we made our own misery. God didn’t do it. Avoid then, the deliberate manufacture of misery, but if trouble does come, cheerfully capitalize it as an opportunity to demonstrate his omnipotence.”

For me, dating in sobriety has definitely been the “deliberate manufacture of misery.” But this is a not a sad dating story. This is a story about finding the love of my life: my Higher Power.

When I got sober in December 2010, my sponsor suggested I stay single for a year. I listened for about two weeks. I’m an alcoholic, see, and “almost without exception,” says our literature, “alcoholics are tortured by loneliness.” How true for me. I was no longer using alcohol to fill the void and I wasn’t interested in “the God thing” either. Instead, I turned to serial dating to satisfy my need for that sense of ease and comfort. (Spoiler alert: it didn’t work out.)

I thought I had found the gifts of recovery. Home group night was date night. I may have worked a Step here and there, and the man (whomever he was at the time) became that Higher Power I so desperately needed. He was my primary purpose. I worked the program this way for over five years and felt like an AA fraud. I was restless and irritable, holding onto my old ideas and looking for that easier, softer way. But by the grace of God, I didn’t take a drink. Surely, there were times when I was close.

In the summer of 2016, my delusion was finally smashed. My heart was broken yet again, the most painful break up of all. I had hit an emotional bottom. The foundation of my sobriety was weak. I had been going it alone, without reaching out to others or seeking a Higher Power. I felt lost. Truly, I had tried to make mortar without sand. Never fear, though. As we are told, “In every case, pain had been the price of admission into a new life.” My sponsor reminds me that in this dark time, through tears, I cried out to her, “I know there’s a lesson in this, I just don’t know what it is!”

But God knew. He took this opportunity to prove his power in my weakness. He had prepared the way for me a year earlier, when I had watched a friend go through a crushingly painful experience of her own in sobriety. It was strange. One day she was miserable, but suddenly not long after, she seemed happy, joyous and free. She was at peace. I didn’t understand what had happened to her but I wanted what she had.

And, bless her heart, she gave me what was so freely given to her. She took me through our Big Book word for word. She showed me how to make seeking God and helping others my top priority. Remember, “God could and would if he were sought.” Only if.

My friend and I had come from the same place. Neither of us had worked the program the way it is described in the Big Book. *(continued on pg. 4)*

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## Concept III

To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. —the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

## Tradition Three - "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking. "

### Thoughts on the Third Tradition

#### A member explains the importance of "the only requirement" in his sobriety

I was toxic, selfish and it was all about me when I walked into the rooms of AA. I was incapable of understanding how AA's traditions helped the group succeed in carrying our primary message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

How could I understand such things when I walked into the rooms. I was the suffering alcoholic and I just wanted my pain to go away. One of the beautiful things about AA is how we love the alcoholic unconditionally. We accept them as they are into our groups and we ask them to keep coming back.

Besides alcoholism, I suffered from severe depression, anxiety, addiction, low self-esteem, and poor social skills. AA explained to me how I had a thinking problem and it was a harsh reality for me to accept. I was defensive. I felt the world was the problem, as well as my parents, the kids I grew up with and the girlfriend who had broken up with me. They were all my problems. I was not my problem. That part of AA didn't make sense to me at first. I was the victim so how could I be the problem? You said to me, keep coming back.

I was slow to learn and it would take me more than a decade before my obsession to drink was lifted. Maybe I could have done a better job working the program and saved myself from a lot of grief. I don't know.

After a few years in the program, I compared myself to my fellow AA members who were great storytellers, wise sages, or comedians helping us to laugh at ourselves and I would beat myself up. I felt like something was wrong with me when I compared myself to them. My story seemed boring. I drank alone with my misery. It was a story of "woe is me."

In other members, some younger than me in sobriety, I saw the Promises unfolding in their lives. They had girlfriends or were getting married, graduating college, getting good jobs, starting families, or having kids. My expectations caused my serenity to suffer. Yet, despite my shortcomings, one message stood out to me like a beacon, my primary purpose - always say, "no" to the first drink no matter what. Sobriety is number one.

One of my favorite stories in the Big Book is "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict" as it was titled when I read it in the Third Edition of the Big Book. I liked this story for many reasons. I loved Doctor Paul's message on acceptance. He put it in terms I could understand. I learned that until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober. I also liked the part about expectations and that my serenity is proportional to my expectations.

I saw I had to let go of my wants and place my faith in God, trusting he knew what was best for me. After all, was it not this cosmic entity of the universe that brought me to AA? My faith and belief in God grew as I saw and felt the mystery of him (or her) working in my life.

I also liked how Doctor Paul was an addict like me and in his story he showed me that the only requirement for membership in AA is a desire to stop drinking. I struggled for a long time whether or not I belonged in AA because I am an addict as well as an alcoholic and my story wasn't just about my alcoholism, it was about my addiction. I learned however I did belong in AA by meeting the requirement of the Third Tradition. At the same time, I accepted the primary purpose of AA, to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

I am grateful how the message of recovery that Bill W., Doctor Bob and the other founders of AA started has spread to the creation of so many other Twelve Step programs. The spirit of AA has helped many beyond our rooms and I think somewhere Bill W. and Doctor Bob are smiling how something they started back in 1934 has spread to help so many people.

When I have read other AA literature like Doctor Bob and the Good Old Timers and AA Comes of Age, I can see all the people who helped to bring life to AA, people like Ebby T., Henrietta Siberling, Sister Ignatia, Father Dowling, Doctor Silkworth, Bill D., Ernie G., Anne Smith and Lois Wilson. The Oxford Group brought together Bill W. and Doctor Bob and gave them a foundation from which they created the Twelve Steps. Jack Alexander's article in the March, 1941 issue of the Saturday Evening Post showed there was help and a way out for the suffering alcoholic in the program of AA. All these early pioneers, both friends and members of AA, helped bring life and spread the *(continued on page 4)*

## Recovery Word Puzzle

BENTDIRTU CO

HYRITTAOU

SNUFREDO

TROSBEI

DOOFINATUN

TEELNEM



LEERZAMAITI

NUTHYAMI

VASEBDOL

SIREYLOVUP

BRUDDITSE

BOSSNEERLIP

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

To all the many volunteers who contributed to the success of  
AA's Got Talent 2019,  
And to all members of the fellowship who came out  
to support the event,  
**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!**



## Volunteer Opportunities

Last Intergroup Appreciation Banquet planning meeting  
INTERGROUP OFFICE, 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Ste. 404, Ft. Lauderdale  
TUESDAY, MARCH 19th— 6:00 PM

The **2019 Gratitude Dinner**, which will be held in November, is now  
seeking volunteers for the various committees .....don't miss the

**FIRST PLANNING MEETING OF THE YEAR**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 31st - 1:00 PM**

101 Club, 700 SW 10th Drive, Pompano Beach, FL 33060

*Pick up a commitment today!!*

**SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER**



(Continued from page 1)

Both of us paid for it with our sanity. We were both inches away from drinking and neither of us could stand it anymore.

So at almost six years sober, I finally did Step Three and turned everything over to God as I now understand him. I even turned over my compulsive desire to always be in a relationship. And wouldn't you know it, the changes I saw in my friend quickly started to materialize in me. I'm finding freedom, peace, serenity, purpose and selflessness. I no longer need another person to "complete" me and suddenly, struggling alcoholics in the rooms of AA are asking me for help. I have worked with more alcoholics in the last six months than I had in all the preceding years combined, all because God saw fit to pull me out of the pit I had dug for myself and to use me to his good purpose.

I now see our Big Book as one big promise. It's not a material promise. There's no talk of a great spouse, a new job or a fancy car. Instead it promises something far more valuable and satisfying: "I was to know happiness, peace, and usefulness, in a way of life that is incredibly more wonderful as time passes ... See to it that your relationship with him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others."

I had to see for myself that our Big Book is not exaggerating. There's much more to life than material things and just not drinking. Now that I've had even a small glimpse of this promise, I'll spend the rest of my life working for it, one day at a time.

God kept me sober through all my self-will. I believe he has great plans for me. But dating in sobriety? That's not in the plan for the next 24 hours. May God's will, definitely not mine, be done.

-- Wendy L., Vancouver, British Columbia

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(continued from page 2)

message of AA and today we continue their legacy of singleness of purpose by helping the alcoholic.

When I look back at the early days of AA, I feel a higher power at work guiding the pioneers of AA and I believe the same Great Spirit that guided them guided me on July 19, 1987 to the rooms of AA and gave me a choice. I could choose to say "Yes" to the first drink or I could choose to say "No."

On July 19 of this year, at the age of 52, I will celebrate 26 years of continuous days of choosing sobriety over the first drink. The choice is the same for all of us: Do I drink or stay sober today? Of course we alcoholics like to live in denial and blame other people, places and things for our choices implying we have no choice at all. It is never our fault. We are always the victim.

If you are an alcoholic like me, once you learn that our lives get worse, never better from drinking and how others suffer as a result, are we then not responsible for what happens when we choose to drink. Just because we are in denial, lying to ourselves and others, does not mean we are absolved from the responsibility for the choices we make in our lives. We as alcoholics are responsible for our disease. We like to think of ourselves as victims having no choice at all but that is just one of many lies we tell ourselves. Whether we want to admit it or not, we alcoholics do have a choice on whether or not to act on our obsession to drink and it all starts with the first one.

I have had my ups and downs in sobriety. I have had dark and hopeless times where all I wanted to do was give up and die. I lost faith in God, humanity and AA. I hated myself. But through it all I never lost sight of my primary purpose and if the end of the day, I had gotten through the day without a drink or using drugs, I knew I had done something right. Slowly my mind did start to clear as a result of my being sober and I did start to make better choices for myself. As a result, my life got better.

Today I live life well with a wife, family and friends who love me and whom I love. I wake up most mornings greeting the day rather than dreading it. I like who I am and I take responsibility for who I am and my choices, good and bad. I continue to be a work in progress. Today I am clean and sober and my faith is stronger than ever in God, humanity and AA. As a result of the Twelve Steps of AA, I have had a spiritual awakening. My attitude toward people, life and myself has changed and my obsession to drink has been lifted.

-- Mark L., Bellingham, Washington

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**District 9 General Service**

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Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

# AA BIRTHDAY'S

## March Celebrants

### Downtown Drydock

Marge Mc. ~ 29 yrs.

### Serenity Altogether

Dave J. ~ 36 yrs.

Ed T. ~ 42 yrs.

### One Day at a Time

Roger S. ~ 23 yrs.

### Oakland Park Group

Fred S. ~ 54 yrs.

Ken P. ~ 12 yrs.

### East Naples Men's

Jim H. ~ 35 yrs.

Mike R. ~ 14 yrs.

Tony C. ~ 19 yrs.

Gary G. ~ 25 yrs.

Jerry T. ~ 18 yrs.

### Margate Group

Janet M. ~ 35 yrs.

### Then and Now

Moe ~ 3 yrs.

### Sobriety on Two

Laura B. ~ 23 yrs.

### Coral Ridge

Group ~ 49 yrs.

### Women's Step Into Sobriety

Debbie D. ~ 15 yrs.

### Express Group

Diane ~ 7 yrs.

Kristin ~ 3 yrs.

Tyi ~ 5 yrs.

Tom M. ~ 29 yrs.

### Sober Sisters

Sharon G. ~ 33 yrs.

Erica ~ 1 yr.

### Splinter Group

Elizabeth C. ~ 2 yrs.

### Friends of Pat C.

Debbie O. ~ 4 yrs.

Lauren C. ~ 8 yrs.

Peggy R. ~ 23 yrs.

### Entirely Ready

Pat W. ~ 18 yrs.

### Mountain Group

Sarah O. ~ 28 yrs.

### Let's Study the Book

Bob H. ~ 28 yrs.

Marilyn M. ~ 7 yrs,

### Sober Today

Bill D. ~ 34 yrs.

Roz A. ~ 40 yrs.

### One Day at a Time

Denny W. ~ 29 yrs.

### Surrender is Freedom

Ellen M. ~ 28 yrs.

### Other Notables

Josh F. ~ 14 yrs.

### By the Book Beginners

Pat R. ~ 28 yrs.

Don G. ~ 11 yrs.

### Tough Love

Patrick M. ~ 8 yrs.

### We Came To Stay

Cheryl L. ~ 24 yrs.

### Thursday Nt. Study

Philip S. ~ 12 yrs.

### Bottomline Group

Justin A. ~ 6 yrs.

### Saturday Morning Awareness

Lisa M. ~ 12 yrs.

### Men's Independence

Adam O. ~ 6 yrs.

Jim W. ~ 30 yrs.

Matthew I. ~ 15 yrs.

Terrance W. ~ 10 yrs.



### Thursday Nt. Study

Brian H. ~ 31 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.)*

**FAITH  
WITHOUT WORKS  
IS DEAD**

**BCIC - Broward County  
Institutions Committee**

**Next Meeting:  
March 9th - 10:00 a.m.**

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

## February Celebrants not previously mentioned

### Bottomline Group

Just Jackie ~ 25 yrs.

### Women's Noontime Boost

Gigi ~ 4 yr.

Judson ~ 50 yrs.

### Women's Honesty

Catherine P. ~ 17 yrs.

### 5:45 Happy Hour

Jacque ~ 42 yrs.

### Let's Do Lunch Bunch

Bob S. ~ 37 yrs.

Daniel F. ~ 12 yrs.

Robert A. ~ 28 yrs.

Jim M. ~ 5 yrs.

Jim A. ~ 17 yrs.

Dwayne K. ~ 14 yrs.

**Next  
Intergroup Meeting**

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

**SUNDAY, March 24th  
at 1:00 p.m.**

**Things we cannot change.....**

***Mona E. and Thomas J.***

***They will be missed. May they Rest in Peace.***



### ***Local Readers Share.....***

I've often heard people say after a relapse, "a head full of AA and a belly full of booze" really screws up your drinking. Well, I got to see that in action this year.....

A friend of mine came by the bookstore I work in a few months ago and insisted he needed to talk to me. He had called ahead, a few times, to make sure I'd be in, and I couldn't imagine what on earth was so pressing, because our relationship was pretty casual. I had seen him in the rooms a few times. He had introduced himself to me as a friend of Bill's the first time he ever came into my bookstore, and I was glad he did. He struck me as a very sweet, honest guy and I was looking forward to getting to know him better. He also offered me some free advice in his area of expertise once when I called him. So, I knew him to be as happy as most young-timers are when they are working their steps and seeing their lives change. He had seemed on fire for the program and I'd run into him doing service just a few months prior.

So, here he was on his lunch hour and he said he needed to make an amends to me. I assured him that he had done nothing to me, and I didn't know what he was talking about. Then, he said, "Well, I broke into this store." I was shocked! "When?!" I said. He explained that it had been last year, when our door glass was shattered and the cabinets had been disturbed, which I remembered clearly. I was incredulous. "But..." I continued, "you didn't take anything."

He replied, "I know. I had relapsed and came in here to get some money, but once I got inside that sober voice inside my head stopped me long enough to say, What are you doing?!" "This is the place that gave you a life."

My friend had clearly turned his will and his life over to the care of God, and God did for him what he couldn't do for himself. He is a sober member of our fellowship once again.

--Anonymous

**Is your group or a member of your group donating a gift that can be raffled off at our Intergroup Appreciation Banquet to be held in April?**

*All gifts must be turned into the office with completed forms no later than Thursday, April 25th so that the committee can ready them for raffle.*

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

*Thank you all for your support.*



### **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., Women's Step by Step 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: contributed, authority, founders, sobriety, foundation, element, materialize, humanity, absolved, previously, disturbed, responsible

**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

### Tuesday

**New Life** DID NOT ACTUALLY MOVE. Meetings are still at Pompano Recreation Center. Format and time remain the same.

### Wednesday

**New Life** DID NOT ACTUALLY MOVE. Meetings are still at the Pompano Recreation Center. Format and time remain the same.

**Sober and Out** which met at the West Broward Club in Davie NO LONGER MEETS.

### Thursday

**NEW MEETING Serenity NOW** 3208 NE 9th Street, Pompano Beach. 8 PM—OSPD.

**Meeting in Print** has moved from the hospital to Our Place 2 in Tamarac, 8447 W. McNab Road.

**Downtown FTL Big Book Study** which met on Broward Blvd. in Ft. Lauderdale NO LONGER MEETS.

**Weston Steppers Women's** meeting which was a Closed Step meeting in Weston is now an Open meeting.

### Friday

**NEW MEETING Downtown Big Book** is meeting at the Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23rd Street, Ft. Lauderdale, 7 PM. OBB

**Hollywood Happy Hour** will NO LONGER meet on Friday night only. All other days, times, formats remain.

### Saturday

**Saturday Night Live** which met at the AARC Bldg. in Oakland Park NO LONGER MEETS.

**Doing the Deal** which meets at Fellowship Recovery Center in Margate now meets at 6:30 PM.

### Sunday

**NEW MEETING The Principles As Bill Sees It** at Lambda South, 1231 E. Las Olas Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale, 7 PM, CSSg.

### DAILY MEETINGS

**Good Morning God** has moved to a new permanent home. They meet every day at 10 AM at Our Place 2, located in Tamarac, 8447 W. McNab Rd. All Formats remain the same.

**The 63rd Florida State Convention 2019 will be held this year  
in Miami, FL ~ Wednesday, July 31st—Sunday, August 4th.  
Get registered today at [63.FloridaStateConvention.com](http://63.FloridaStateConvention.com)**

## Upcoming Events

- Mar. 2** **District 9 SYS Spring Fling Chili Cook-Off and Dinner** NSU Cafeteria and Steele Auditorium, 3200 S. University Drive, Davie. Dinner 5:30 PM, Speaker 8:15 PM, Karaoke. Bring your best chili and enter contest. \$8 in advance/ \$10 at the door. Bring a dessert to share and a newcomer.
- Apr. 5-7** **South Florida Area 15 General Service Assembly** hosted by Districts 6 & 7 will be held at the Boca Raton Marriott at Boca Center, 5150 Town Center Circle, Boca Raton. This is a free service event. Come see the third legacy in action on Sunday afternoon.
- Apr. 27** **56th Annual Intergroup Appreciation Banquet** Tropical Acres Steakhouse, Griffin Road, Ft. Lauderdale, 6 PM Fellowship and Appetizers, 7 PM Prime Rib or Salmon Dinner, 8 PM Speakers, Followed by gift raffles. Elegant evening of fun and appreciation for the many volunteers of Broward County Intergroup. Tickets \$45 in advance only. **SOLD OUT EVENT**
- May 4** **District 9 Archives - Old Timers Meeting** Hull Auditorium, NSU, Davie—free event
- May 9-12** **Big Book Seminar 2019** in the spirit of Joe and Charlie. Boca Raton Marriott, 5150 Town Center Circle, Boca Raton. For more info and to register online go to <https://bigbookseminar.org>