



Suite 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.
Oakland Commerce Center
3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
Phone 954-462-7202, 954-462-0265; www.aabroward.org

VOLUME 5
MAY 2018

Step Five — *“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”*

Humor The Sixth Sense

Way back in the late 1950s when I was a young lad, one of my favorite TV shows was The Three Stooges: Larry, Curly, and Moe. Moe was the serious one, Curly was the dunce, and Larry was the fall guy, always caught in the middle between Curly and Moe. It was a curious comedy act, looking back on it after all these years, yet there was an important lesson to be learned that would surface many years later when I finally got sober.

What made me laugh so hard watching the show was the way these three stooges screwed everything up and then blamed each other and beat up on each other.

They would poke one another in the eye, hit each other with a hammer or a steel pipe, or punch each other in the stomach. It was a non-stop violent vendetta! I was a little boy being entertained by dismal failure and brutal behavior. The TV stations today are loaded with the very same brand of comedy. How could mishap, bungling, retaliation, and downright stupidity be so entertaining? It would take me years of hard drinking, many mishaps, and heaps of humiliation to find the simple answer.

I went to my second "first AA meeting" a little over two years ago, having been given a second chance. I was full of shame, regret, and self-hatred. I remember being confused when someone would tell a story about some senseless, harmful, often self-destructive scenario they pulled off when drunk. Almost everyone at the meeting would laugh, some with tears in their eyes, like they were in some kind of hilarious pain. Why were they--even the storyteller--laughing? These crazy folks weren't just chuckling. Their laughter came from someplace deep inside. All I could feel was regret and resentment when I looked at the wreckage of my past: the people I had poked in the eyes and the times I got hit in the head with a hammer--often held in my own hand. I kept my story to myself for a long time. I saw nothing funny about my last forty years of insanity.

Two years sober in AA have passed by quickly, after a slow start wracked by compulsion and fear. My life seems to have started over again from scratch. Everything is different. I think the most remarkable change has been the way I perceive myself and my past. The first five Steps exposed a man who is

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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 V

Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

Tradition Five - “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

For Charlie's Sake Squabbling ceased when a newcomer's needs turned the group to its primary purpose

Over coffee at an all-night cafeteria some years ago, disagreements flared among four or five tables of AAs. There was dissension about the bookkeeping of the clubhouse treasurer, about dues and rules for membership, about the brand of coffee, and about the right of the program secretary to schedule a nonalcoholic speaker. I recall feeling vehement about several of these matters, and I expect I got loud, too.

Suddenly, someone brought to our attention a newcomer who had attended his very first meeting that night. All arguing ceased, as if by magic. Everyone pitched in to comfort Charlie and encourage him. Even those of us who did not care for each other acted polite and friendly, for new Charlie's sake.

We ended the evening amicable and united. Although this happened in 1945, before our Twelve Traditions were written, their good sense prevailed among us. It was a beautiful demonstration that “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers,” our Fifth Tradition. No one doubted that Charlie's welfare was more important than our petty arguments.

For me, there was still another lesson embedded in that one. Since I was so new myself, I had been made to feel very much like the most important alcoholic present—until then. But when Charlie appeared, I wasn't. Not even to myself.

Much later, I realized that my nose had not gone fiercely out of joint, that I had not gone all-over jealous. I had been so eager to help Charlie (with my vast store of AA knowledge gained in about six weeks) that I had not suffered even a twinge of sibling rivalry. I began to think of someone else, not of what I wanted.

It was a classic illustration of the “twelfth suggestion” made in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* at the beginning of Chapter 7: “Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail.”

So the Fifth Tradition, like the Twelfth Step, encourages me to become progressively less self-concerned and more concerned about others. Traditions repeatedly have that effect on me, and that is why I rank them as highly significant in our process of recovery.

The Fifth, like others, has a liberating effect. As AAs, we don't have to get tied up in owning real estate or operating clubs, with all the organizational, legal and financial hassles and ego battles such projects would involve us in. We need not try to become a medical or a religious fraternity, an educational organization or a political one. Because of the Fifth Tradition, we are free of the necessity of raising large sums, or trying to change society. It is not our purpose as AAs to educate children about drinking, nor to teach the medical profession or the government about alcoholism. These might be side effects or spin-offs of what we do, just as a network of enjoyable and therapeutic social activities may also result from AA life. But they are not our chief purpose; they are subordinate to our goal of staying sober and helping others.

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Thank you so much to all the groups and individuals who so generously contributed to our 55th Annual Appreciation Banquet Raffle. Also, a big thank you to all the volunteers and everyone in attendance. The event was a beautiful evening and a wonderful fundraiser for Intergroup. We are so grateful for your support!

Local Readers Share.....

My favorite passage from AA literature comes from page 152 in Alcoholics Anonymous, chapter "A Vision For You" and states:

We have shown how we got out from under. You say, "Yes, I'm willing. But am I to be consigned to a life where I shall be stupid, boring and glum, like some righteous people I see? I know I must get along without liquor, but how can I? Have you a sufficient substitute?"

Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. There you will find release from care, boredom and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead. Thus we find the fellowship, and so will you.

"How is that to come about?" you ask. "Where am I to find these people?"

You are going to meet these new friends in your own community. Near you, alcoholics are dying helplessly like people in a sinking ship. If you live in a large place, there are hundreds. High and low, rich and poor, these are future fellows of Alcoholics Anonymous. Among them you will make lifelong friends. You will be bound to them with new and wonderful ties, for you will escape disaster together and you will commence shoulder to shoulder your common journey. Then you will know what it means to give of yourself that others may survive and rediscover life. You will learn the full meaning of "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

AA has given me a design for living that helps solve any life circumstance that's come my way. I've not had to go through anything alone since I've been around the fellowship. In fact, there's nowhere I have been where I can't find a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. Early on, someone said "my disease doesn't take a vacation" so, anytime I travel, I find the fellowship.

Each time I find a new place to discover, I am welcomed with love, support, and open arms from fellow AA's. Without the literature and ability to get connected from local intergroup offices, I don't know if I would have made it through certain times in my sobriety. I thank God for bringing us together in our brokenness and using that to beautifully help heal each other.

— Heather C., Ft. Lauderdale

Volunteer Opportunities

2018 DISTRICT 9 GRATITUDE DINNER to be held in November will have their next planning meeting at the Lambda South Clubhouse, 1231 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale on **Sunday, May 27 at 1:30 PM**

District 9 Founders' Day Picnic is having the next 3 planning meetings at 7 PM, Lester's Diner, 1924 E. Atlantic Blvd., Pompano
MAY 2 - MAY 16 - MAY 30

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

Next Planning Meeting is **Saturday, May 19th 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)

fully human, all the best and the worst, wrapped up in a package with skin on it.

I can't go back and change the past. So what do I do with all the junk from my past? The Twelve Steps deal with just this predicament: moving from regret to a sincere attempt to avoid repeating my harmful behavior, with honesty being the driving force.

Following this was the journey of forgiveness that began to infiltrate my life of sobriety after I admitted and took responsibility for my wrongs by doing the Fifth Step. As a result, I was granted a brand new outlook on the wreckage of my past. This puts my junk to work; I help others by telling my story. As the months go by, my story gets more humorous as it gets more honest. As a good friend of mine in AA says: "You can't make this stuff up!"

This new perspective on my past is a gift I call the sixth sense--the sense of humor. It is a healer of wounds. It's a light at the end of the tunnel. It's the tie that binds me to other alcoholics. It transforms tears of sorrow to tears of gratitude. The newfound capacity to laugh at myself is the antidote AA has given me to counteract the poison called resentment that kills so many alcoholics. I believe this sixth sense is part of the psychic change Dr. Silkworth talks about at the beginning of the Big Book.

Now when I sit listening to another's story of what it was like, I can laugh along with the others, not at the storyteller, but at the Larry, Curly, and Moe inside of me. Without this gift of humor, my sobriety would surely regress into a bone-dry desert, bristling with restlessness, irritability, and discontentment.

A genuine sense of humor touches, tastes, hears, sees, and even smells the world in a unique way, a kind and colorful way. This new sixth sense AA meetings have given me is a blend of awe, wonder, and gratitude--a magic potion, you could say. Behind this glow of laughter and acceptance is the light of forgiveness. A sense of humor transforms restless, irritable, and discontented sobriety into quality sobriety. "We aren't a glum lot," the Big Book says. Now I know why.

—Ed C., Bowling Green, Kentucky

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**NEW WHERE AND WHENS
are NOW IN STOCK.**

Please make sure your group
information is accurate.

**COME BY AND PICK UP A FEW FOR
THE NEWCOMERS
ATTENDING YOUR MEETINGS.**

**THE INTERGROUP OFFICE
WILL BE CLOSED ON MAY 28
IN OBSERVANCE OF
MEMORIAL DAY.**

**WE HOPE YOU ALL ENJOY A
SAFE, SOBER,
HAPPY HOLIDAY WEEKEND!**



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 Terrace, Ste 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

District 9 General Service

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

AA BIRTHDAY'S

May Celebrants

Express

Jodi W. ~ 17 yrs.
Geri ~ 9 yrs.
Donna H. ~ 9 yrs.
Dave H. ~ 6 yrs.
Bobby ~ 6 yrs.

Serenity Alltogether

David H. ~ 6 yrs.
Ron J. ~ 34 yrs.

Broward Men's

Sebastian ~ 3 yrs.
Oscar N. ~ 15 yrs.

Ft. Lauderdale Women's

Judy J. ~ 13 yrs.

We Came To Stay Group ~ 31 yrs.

Ft Lauderdale Men's Group ~ 52 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Jan S. ~ 33 yrs.
MaryJo W. ~ 32 yrs.
LouAnne ~ 2 yrs.
Dawn H. ~ 26 yrs.

Plantation Happy Hour

Keith N. ~ 3 yrs.
Lou P. ~ 18 yrs.
Peggy D. ~ 13 yrs.
Robin S. ~ 24 yrs.
Howard S. ~ 3 yrs.

Then and Now

Tim S. ~ 35 yrs.

Other Notables

Aisling ~ 19 yrs.
Gail O. ~ 35 yrs.
Jeff S. ~ 29 yrs.
Christopher C. ~ 12 yrs.

Meeting in Print

Bill G. ~ 16 yrs.
Carl H. ~ 33 yrs.
Craig C. ~ 32 yrs.

5:45 Happy Hour

Linden ~ 32 yrs.

Freedom From Alcohol

Jackie S. ~ 36 yrs.

Saturday Morning Awareness

Joey B. ~ 6 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.)



April Celebrants – not previously mentioned

Into Action

Robin D. ~ 9 yrs.

Why It Works

Gerry B. ~ 35 yrs.

Lunch Bunch

Fevi ~ 3 yrs.

Happy Destiny

Kris ~ 2 yrs.



Things we cannot change.....

Louis C.

*He will be missed.
May he Rest in Peace.*

BCIC - Broward County Institutions Committee

Next Meeting:
May 12th 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, MAY 20th
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.

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



R U S E D I R F N A
M Y P A R R I
T E T S B U S I U
D O E S R U N F
V E S R O C N A B
T R A C E C U A

Using the red or underlined letters,
unscramble them to fill in the blanks below
for a special message.

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(continued from page 2)

Another time, I saw AA members really mistreat a sick and shaking alcoholic. He had managed on his own to get to the clubhouse where the group met, and he asked for somebody to talk to him—to tell him what he should do to stay sober.

No one had time. Clubhouse officers had to discuss the upcoming anniversary party, and a couple of other members were planning new furniture arrangements and swapping fishing tales. My excuse was that I was just a visitor from out of town and had to catch a plane home soon.

I felt awful on the flight and took our inventory pretty sternly. It was the clearest instance I could remember then of violation of our Fifth Tradition.

We all agree, I hope, that such things should not happen. Aren't we unanimous in the conviction that helping a new prospect is more important than planning a party or chinning with old friends?

If there is any one thing on which all, or nearly all, AAs can agree, maybe our primary purpose is it. There's a world of things we can all disagree on, thanks to Tradition Five. We do not have to see eye-to-eye on theological issues, on politics, on the causes and psychology of alcoholism, or even on how to stay sober. So it is beautiful, I think, for us to have one notion we all salute and honor--our primary purpose. When we carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, it binds us together and can heal ever so many wounds.

— B.L., New York, NY

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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.

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: traditional, celebrants, holiday, volunteer, consideration, message, fundraiser, primary, substitute, founders, observance, accurate, grateful today and every minute sober!



MEETING CHANGES

Monday

NEW MEETING Men's 11 Step Candlelight Meditation Meeting meets at 8:30 PM, Prince of Peace Church, 6012 NW 9th Court, Margate, 33063. CM.

Tuesday

Free To Be which meets in Ft. Lauderdale has canceled the meditation meeting.

Six Step Recovery which met in Oakland Park NO LONGER MEETS.

NEW MEETING Russian Speaking Alcoholics of S.Florida has added another meeting. 8:30 PM, OBB, All Russian speakers welcome. Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23 Street, Fort Lauderdale. This is an OPEN meeting.

Wednesday

Meeting on the Porch, which met in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Thursday

Atlantic Group has moved to St. Martin's in the Field and changed their start time to 7:30 PM. They are now at 140 SE 28th Avenue, Pompano Beach, 33062. The format remains the same.

NEW MEETING Sense of Purpose meets at 8 PM, Parish of Sts. Francis and Clare, 2300 NW 9th Avenue, Wilton Manors, CD. THIS IS A DAY CHANGE FROM LAST MONTH'S NOTICE. (originally on Friday).

Friday

NEW MEETING Speakeasy is meeting at 7 PM, 2630 E. Oakland Park Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale 33306. CSPD.

NEW MEETING Meditation at the Rock meets at 6:30 PM at 140 W. Prospect Rd., Oakland Park, 6:30 PM, OM

Saturday

Men's Meeting on the Porch, which met in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Sunday

Good Morning God which meets in Sunrise has changed the time to 10:00 AM.

Daily

Weekday Recovery which met at 5:30 PM at West Broward Club in Davie NO LONGER MEETS.

***** **The Porch** in Hollywood has been a meeting location for many years, but will be closed to meetings soon. Please be advised, before sending someone to a meeting there. Check the website or call the office to confirm before going. The meetings listed there are currently seeking a new location.

Upcoming Events

- May 5** **District 9 Archives Old Timers Meeting** at NSU, 3200 S. University Drive, Davie. Coffee and dessert at 5:30 PM, 3 speakers starting at 7 PM with 35+ years of recovery. FREE. Please bring a dessert and a newcomer if you can.
- 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
- May 23** **Ft. Lauderdale Men's Group Anniversary Dinner**, St. Mark's Church, 1750 E. Oakland Park Blvd., Speaker Meeting at 6:30 PM, Dinner following. Open to all.
- June 3** **Founder's Day Picnic**, Snyder Park, 3299 SW 4th Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, 11 AM - 4 PM, Hawaiian Style, \$8 in advance, \$10 at gate, kids under 10 eat free, Live band, speaker at 2 PM, Volleyball, horseshoes, No pets at the picnic please.
- June 15-18** **Sisters by the Sea Women's Conference** Hilton Naples, 5111 Tamiami Trail, Naples, FL, Registration \$45. For more info go to www.sistersbythesea.org or call Intergroup.