

# **ROOM 502**

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

305 South Andrews Avenue, Room 502, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 Phone 954-462-0265, 954-462-7202; www.aabroward.org

> VOLUME 5 MAY, 2015

## The Fifth Step-

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

## More Ups than Downs

# Learning to see the ridiculous in the things we are doing wrong.

THIS PAST winter, I drove down to our little park when there was a lot of snow on the ground. Some teenagers began throwing snowballs at my car. One hit my windshield hard. I burst into a perfect rage. I almost ground my teeth as I stopped the car. The kids must have seen that I was furious. How gratifying! I got out of the car, and I can't tell you what my intentions were. Was I going to kill all the little darlings and chop them into small pieces? The absurdity of the thing hit me, and I began to laugh. I made a couple of snowballs and threw them at the kids. They threw a few at me. A good time was now being had by all.

So I said, "I think my score's pretty good for an adult." And I got back into the car and drove off, still laughing.

I think it's perfectly wonderful when we can see a ridiculous element in something we're doing or thinking that's wrong. In the snowball episode, I admitted that I was being an ass. I didn't need God or an AA friend for that one, though I told on myself later.

Anger, like fear, is destructive and self-destructive. So are envy, resentment, self-pity, insecurity. Fear and insecurity can make us opinionated and domineering, which isn't good for our nearest and dearest. Good old aged-in-the-wood resentments can crop up with the right stimulus and make us take other people's inventories full-volume, or nag them gently and forever, so that life becomes miserable for our beloved victims. Resentment and envy can make us malicious and gossipy, unpleasant company both for those other people and for ourselves. Have we looked in the mirror when we're feeling this way? It's revelatory.

Perhaps we haven't lashed out at anybody with words or actually done anything to them. Perhaps our anger is backed up into depression, and we feel like the wrong end of a worm. Self-pity. Yes, yes! There's plenty of cause for this--situations all the way from irritating to tragic. But we need to regain our inner strength, or learn to get some if we're new in AA and feel we never had any.

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May 1978 Vol. 34 No. 12

Reprinted from AA Grapevine ©

"Well, what is it this time? Lust, pride, anger, envy, gluttony, greed, or sloth?"

Sa

## **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."

## Our Primary Purpose and the Special-purpose Group

In recent years, no subject seems to have been discussed more often, in more detail, for longer hours, and with more heat than the question of special-purpose groups. Both the advocates and the adversaries of special-purpose groups hold very strong opinions on the subject, and those of us who have tried to occupy the middle ground can see the logic on both sides.

Our Third Tradition says, "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking." In general, we have inclined to this view: When other requirements are added that might seem to exclude some alcoholics, these should be considered AA meetings and not AA groups. We have never discouraged AAs from forming special-purpose meetings of any or all kinds to meet the needs of interested individuals, but we have been hesitant to consider as groups those that might seem to exclude any alcoholic, for whatever reason.

Many members feel that no AA group is special and, therefore, that no group should be labeled as such or even give the impression that it is "special." However, the fact is that such groups do exist --in the United States and Canada, at least. There are women's groups, stag groups, young people's groups, and groups for priests, doctors, lawyers, and homosexual members. These groups feel that the "labels" serve the purpose of attraction (double identification) and are not intended to imply exclusion of other alcoholics.

Probably the earliest of the so-called special-purpose groups were women's groups, and it is very easy to understand how they came about. In the early days of the Fellowship, before AA was well-known and when its membership was made up largely of male alcoholics, many women felt very timid about attending such groups, and their husbands felt even more strongly about having them attend. The solution seemed to be daytime meetings made up of women, and many of these began to spring up all over our country. Beyond any doubt, they served (and probably still do serve) a very useful purpose, and many of the women who started in these groups went on to become extremely active members of regular, mixed groups of alcoholics.

The adversaries of the special-purpose group would say that this is an instance where the good became the enemy of the best, to use co-founder Bill W.'s phrase. Once AA had accepted one kind of special-purpose group, it became difficult, if not almost impossible, not to accept others.

We have no difficulty in understanding the kind of communication and understanding that can exist among groups of people who share other interests in addition to their alcoholism. It has always been hoped that doctors, priests, policemen, young people, women, etc. who meet together in special groups will also participate in the activities of regular, mixed AA groups. We live in a world made up of all kinds of people, who function in a variety of professions, and it is in this world that we have to function as individuals. If AA is a preparation and support for normal living, then it would seem that the most meaningful AA activity would occur in groups made up of all kinds of people who follow all kinds of professions.

Continued on Page 4

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

P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10164-0371 212.870.3127

> Bridging The Gap 877.207.2242

#### Broward Co. Intergroup, Inc.

305 S. Andrews Ave. Room 502 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301 954.462.0265

P.O. Box 22701 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335

#### **Area 15 General Service**

Treasurer, P.O. Box 690275 Vero Beach, FL 32969-0275 (772)360-7949

#### **District 9 General Service**

P.O. Box 100126 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310 Continued from Page 1

If we have taken Step Four, we have probably discussed some of our character defects already, so it's easier to remember them now. Step Five is a further sharing and verbalization of the moral inventory. We are beginning to learn that nobody is going to send us to the guillotine because of our

shortcomings. We won't be rejected. We won't be punished. Not in AA. We can pray for guidance and insight, and we can choose someone who is wise, loving, and discreet to talk all this over with.

How many times I have taken this Step with myself, with my AA friends, and with God! And I haven't always done it too well. But I am learning, as I go along, to eliminate complaint and excuse and admit that I've done thus-and-thus to others or to myself, because of this or that anger or fear--or that I have omitted doing what I really wanted to do, because kindness and consideration have been submerged by harassment or worry. When someone else comes to you for help, or you listen to others at a closed meeting and contribute some remarks yourself, you find, for the thousandth time, that you are not alone. Other people have these feelings. They have done the same things. It's perfectly astonishing how often we go back to thinking of ourselves as "special."

When I was drinking, I was an angry person who hated herself and took other people's inventories. When I was first sober, I was an angry person and went on taking other people's inventories. Now and again, I still am tempted to set somebody straight. If I do, I try to make amends. I am not as given to arrogance as I was, because I am slowly accepting myself, liabilities and all. I even think I might have a few assets. AA taught me that it was safe to evaluate myself.

Ten thousand thanks and a golden coffee mug to each of you, whom I love so much, who have listened to me so long, who have helped me to find out about myself. It's a wonderful feeling to know that you don't have to be a god or a goddess, a saint or a genius, to lead a reasonably happy, sober, healthy, communicative, constructive, and useful life--with some laughter thrown in for good measure.

—F. M., New Canaan, CT—

Reprinted from *Grapevine* June 1974 Vol. 31 No. 1

# Things we cannot change, He will be missed by all who knew him. Thom R.

Room 502 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 or will@aabroward.org

Continued from Page 2

Certainly, we hope not, and we don't anticipate any such thing. However, we do feel that we should be aware of a possible trend and perhaps bend every effort to encourage our similarities and not our particularities.

I mentioned earlier that we have never discouraged special-purpose meetings but have been hesitant to list as groups those that might seem to preclude other alcoholics' attending. Perhaps we might talk a little bit about the differences between an AA meeting and an AA group. Our directories state: "Traditionally, two or more alcoholics meeting together for purposes of sobriety may consider themselves an AA group, provided that, as a group, they are self-supporting and have no outside affiliation." And in the beginning of our Fellowship in countries outside the United States and Canada, we agreed on six points that describe what an AA group is. They are:

"(1) All members of a group are alcoholics, and all alcoholics are eligible for membership. (2) As a group, they are fully self-supporting. (3) A group's primary purpose is to help alcoholics recover through the Twelve Steps. (4) As a group, they have no outside affiliation. (5) As a group, they have no opinion on outside issues. (6) As a group, their public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion, and they maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio-TV, and film."

Without a doubt, meetings are the primary activity of each AA group and the most common way of carrying the message to newcomers and to other members who want to maintain recovery. When we make a distinction between AA groups and AA meetings, we are emphasizing a concept rather than the format of what actually happens when AAs get together. We think of an AA group as something that continues to exist even when there is no meeting taking place, because a group does many other things besides hold meetings. On the other hand, special-purpose meetings, which take care of the needs of interested individuals, are usually informal gatherings with no particular structure.

At the 1973 General Service Conference, workshops on "The AA Group" were held and went into overtime because of lengthy discussion on the subject of special-purpose groups. By request of this Conference, the subject was scheduled for full-scale discussion at the 1974 Conference. The time allotted for it again proved to be insufficient and a special session--lasting four hours--was called. The final action was that the AA General Service Office should list all groups in accordance with the definition of an AA group listed in the front of all our directories.

In the final analysis, perhaps, what we are really dealing with in special-purpose groups is communication among AA members and how to improve it so that we can do a better job of carrying the AA message to alcoholics of all kinds.

-John L. Norris, MD-

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Room 502 is a monthly publication of Broward County Intergroup, Inc. (BCI).

The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of BCI or AA as a whole.

We welcome your stories, news and comments. The deadline for submission is the 15th of each month.

Material may be edited for space and content and cannot be returned.

Please send your submissions to will@aabroward.org or help@aabroward.org.



# May Celebrants

Dave A. ~ 13yrs.
Dave M. ~ 40yrs.
Paul G. ~ 13yrs.
Steve B. ~ 14yrs.
Frank S. ~ 5yrs.
Larry F. ~ 22yrs.

Men in Recovery

**Meeting in Print** 

Bill G. ~ 13yrs. Carl H. ~ 30yrs. Craig C. ~ 29yrs.

Oakland Park

Chris M. ~ 5yrs. Oscar ~ 12yrs. Ed F. ~ 44yrs.

Mountain Group Andrea O. ~ 8yrs.

Margaret B. ~ 11yrs.

You Are Not Alone

Sherry L. ~ 10yrs. Edward W. ~ 7yrs. Dave M. ~ 6yrs.

Ft. Lauderdale Women's

Janyce F. ~ 26yrs.

Lunch Bunch

Cherry ~ 3yrs.

Jeanne ~ 3yrs.

Kathy May ~ 10yrs.

Robin ~ 21yrs.

Jim V. ~ 37yrs.

**East Naples Men's** 

Frank S. ~ 53yrs.
Randy G. ~ 35yrs.
Walter B. ~ 25yrs.
Noel H. ~ 23yrs.
Mike G. ~ 9yrs.
Matt ~ 5yrs.

#### Westside Men's

Chris O. ~ 24yrs. Dave M. ~ 15yrs. Mark W. ~ 9yrs.

Eye Opener
Barbara. ~ 31yrs.
Mary J. ~ 18yrs.

May Celebrants (not previously submitted)

Tamarac Group Dennis G. ~ 1yr.

Congratulations to all of our celebrants. You deserve to be recognized. Celebrants should be submitted as early as possible, by the 15th, of the preceding month at the latest. (Example) May celebrants should be submitted by April 15th, to be published in the May Newsletter. Thank you for your time and effort.

### Where and When Changes-

If your meeting has moved, changed time, or format. Please let the Intergroup office know as soon as possible, or by the end of May, to be printed in the next Where and When. Changes can be made via phone 954-462-0265 or e-mailed to help@aabroward.org.

Please help us carry the message. If your meeting has moved or changed time, an alcoholic looking for help, may never receive it if your meeting is not where the where and when says it is.

## Word Scramble Tradition Five

(answers on page 7)

1.	tiarlen	
2.	fleatiafi	
3.	noovteiaslonncrr	
4.	steerdsisn	
5.	dealyal	
6.	grimnaws	
7.	surlyoesi	
8.	gleorusanti	
9.	packsteli	
10.	rmptrooe	

#### It's your Birthday!

Many AA members across the country share their Anniversary by giving a dollar or two, for each year of their sobriety to their Intergroup Office. This insures that the same help that they received will be available to others who are new to the fellowship.

Start today. It is not how much you give that's important. It's thinking of others on your special day, that makes it so special. This is a wonderful way to express your gratitude by helping others receive the blessings of sobriety.

Group Contributions and individual contributions are the life support of Alcoholic Anonymous. There is no such thing as a small contribution.

Make checks payable to:

Broward County Intergroup, Inc. 305 S. Andrews Ave., Suite 502, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301

Broward County Intergroup would like to gives thanks to our banquet chair Jean G.

and all of the volunteers who helped make our annual Volunteer Appreciation dinner a great success

BCIC Broward County
Institutions Committee
Next Meeting: May 9<sup>th</sup>
10:00 a.m. at the Twelve Step House,
205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale.

Intergroup Meetings
will be now held at
The Twelve Step House,
205 S.W. 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ft. Lauderdale,
at 1:00 p.m.
Steering Committee meets at 11:30 a.m.
Upcoming Meetings
May 17<sup>th</sup>— June 21<sup>st</sup>

## **Anyone For Tennis?**

She came to see that hiding booze in tennis ball canisters in the garage was not social drinking

When I look back at the progression of my drinking, a couple of experiences stand out as clues that my drinking wasn't normal.

One was how upset I felt when tennis ball cans went from opaque metal to clear plastic. At the time, I hid a substantial supply of booze in those cans in my garage.

Another telling moment was when the news came out that a former president's wife was seeking help for alcoholism. It gave me pause and I thought, "Maybe not drinking will become fashionable!"

When my business travel increased for my job, I felt free at last to drink with abandon. My descent into chronic alcoholism was steep and rapid. I began to excuse my drinking in the company of friends by saying that I was planning on quitting.

One morning at brunch with friends after a haunting blackout, I was confronted by a friend who said, "I thought you were going to quit drinking?"

"I am," I responded. "The ticket to the spa is home on my dresser."

My plan for stopping drinking was to go to a spa for a week.

"Why not just call AA?" the friend asked, handing me the phone while reading the number for AA out of the phone book. With the eyes of everyone at the table on me, I dialed the number.

A deep, gravelly voice answered. "My name is Shirley and I'm an alcoholic." Shirley asked me if I was willing to do anything to stop drinking. At that moment, with everyone looking at me, I said, "Yes."

A short while later, feeling like a teenager on a dare, I signed into detox. After the admissions procedure, I was wheeled down a long, dim hallway, and through a door bearing an ominous black sign that read, "Alcohol Detoxification."

While in detox, I attended my first AA meeting. It was held in a windowless, smoky room in the hospital basement. I watched in frozen panic as the hospital aides wheeled in patients, mostly old men in bathrobes, slumped over, some drooling.

Next ,the booming voice of the meeting leader who was reading "How it Works," seemed to emphasize the words, "If you want what we have ..." Looking around the room at the motley crew assembled there, I was convinced that AA was not for me. In short, I was not one of those people who felt at home once they found their way to AA.

For some time, I fancied myself as a visitor-observer in AA. Frequently, I bent my sponsor's ear about how unsuitable AA was for a person like me. "Get over yourself!" He would say. When I was in self-pity, he would say, "Get off the cross, we need the wood."

In time, I accepted Step One. In spite of myself, I became one of the very people I had scorned and cynically labeled "a kook." Those were the people who said they were grateful to be alcoholics.

As I watched people in meetings get jobs, cars, and teeth and also lose jobs, cars, and teeth, and meet all manner of life's challenges with the help of AA and their fellows, I came to know hope. I was able to do Steps Two and Three once I had hope.

My sponsor would tell me that the person I was would drink again but that Steps Four through Nine were there to help me begin to change for the better. These Steps helped me to take responsibility for my attitudes and actions, to take the actions of others less personally and myself less seriously. I also began to set things right in my relationships with family, friends and at work. With the help of Steps Eight and Nine, I began to ask, "Bless them, change me." (I used to say, "Bless me, change them.")

Today, Step Ten is a daily practice, one of taking responsibility for my actions. It helps me learn from my mistakes as well as mend and improve my relationships with others. It's a way to practice what AA calls, "right living." When I finally came to Step Eleven, my sponsor took a deep, exasperated breath and said:

"You are awfully good at asking your Higher Power for what you want – like a child making lists for Santa. The problem is that you never check the mail. You refuse to take time to practice gratitude, and to open yourself to your Higher Power's will for you in matters great and small."

With that, the lights of Step Eleven went on for me at last. Today, this is the Step that helps me pause and ask my Higher Power for help.

Thanks to my sponsor, I have been active in AA service from the very earliest days in my sobriety: welcoming new-comers, making coffee, sharing at meetings, having a homegroup, attending business meetings, and being a sponsor. Today, I cherish this design for living as a way of life. I am deeply grateful and believe that to sustain the full and meaningful sobriety I have today requires that I pass it along to others.

**Faithful Fivers** are fellow 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 B., June C., Ron J. Bob H., Anonymous I, Bobby V., Janet M., Dan C., Lu W., Elizabeth B., Happiness Is Group, Lillian M., Fran C., Milinda B., Barbara S., Lois O., Richard H., Gay M., Richard S., Sam B., Mark S. Howard S., Douglas C., Jennifer S., the other Bob H., Carol B., the original Bob H., Leslie R.

## and maybe YOU next time?

vvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvvv

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!
10 to the court of the first of

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. 305 S. Andrews Ave., Suite 502, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301

### Answers from page 5:

- 1. reliant
- 2. affiliate
- 3. noncontroversial
  - 4. dissenters
    - 5. allayed
  - 6. swarming
  - 7. seriously
  - 8. regulations
    - 9. skeptical
  - 10. promoter

# Broward County Intergroup is hosting the Intergroup Central Office AAWS / AAGV Seminar September 17th—20th, 2015

Sheraton Airport Ft. Lauderdale.
If you would like to participate in the wonderful experience of planning the Seminar

PLEASE join us for our first planning meeting held at the Intergroup Office

305 S. Andrews Ave. Suite 502, Fort Lauderdale Wednesday, May 13th at 6:30 PM

The 5 COMMITTEES: Transportation, Hospitality, Registration, Program/Meeting, and Final Report all need volunteers to help make the seminar a success. E-mail: www.help@aabroward.org

## **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.

### **MEETING CHANGES**

#### Monday

**NEW MEETING <u>Lambda Rising 11th Step Group,</u>** 7:00p.m., Lambda Clubhouse, 1231 Las Olas, OMg **Tuesday** 

**NEW MEETING** By the Book Beginners Group, 7:30p.m., St. Francis, 208 SE 8th St, OBG Wednesday

**NEW MEETING** Young and Free, 8:45 p.m. 12 Step House, 205 SW 23rd St., Fort Lauderdale, 33315. OCC. Thursday

<u>Thursday Night Study Group</u>, 7:30 p.m., Sunrise, has moved to Unity,1501 NE 26th St, Wilton Manors OBB **Friday** 

**NEW MEETING <u>AA Late Night</u>**, 10 p.m. Faith Christian Church, 7676 Davie Rd. Ext. @ 77th Ave., Davie, 33024 **NEW MEETING <u>Women's Hope in Recovery</u>**, First Presby, 2331 NE 26 Ave., Pompano, CSTw 11-st Meditation.

#### Saturday

**Zion on the Beach** Life Guard Station 8, Deerfield Beach. **No longer meets**.

**To Stay Alive Saturday Night**, 8:00 p.m., Has moved to St. Boniface Catholic Church, Ministry Building, Room 6, 8330 Johnson St., Pembroke Pines, 33024 OD

#### Sunday

<u>Sunrise Beginners</u>, 9:30 a.m. Sunrise, has moved to Sun Village Plaza, 4577 N. University Dr. Lauderhill 33351 **Daily** 

**Dania After Work Group**, 5:30 p.m., has moved to St. Maurice Catholic Church, 441 NE 2nd St. Dania 33004.

## Upcoming Events

- **May 7-10 37th Big Book Seminar,** Embassy Suites Fort Lauderdale, 1100 SE 17th Street, Ft. Lauderdale. Registration \$25.00. For more info visit, www.bigbookseminar.org.
- **49th Annual Ft. Lauderdale Men's Anniversary Dinner**, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 1750 E. Oakland Park Blvd. Ft. Lauderdale. 6:30p.m. Meeting, Dinner following . Ladies are invited for this occasion.
- **May 23** Unity X Breakfast, presented by BCIC, Intergroup & General Service District 9. \$5.00, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., 12 Step House, 205 SW 23rd Street. 33315
- **May 29-31 Girlstock** A Journey Through the Steps, Hilton Atlanta Airport, 1031 Virginia Ave., Atlanta, GA. Registration \$35.00. For more info visit polly@onsight.com.
- **June 5-7 Steps to Serenity -** Naples Grande, 475 Seagate Drive, Naples, FL. 34103 Registration \$35.00. For more info Visit www.serenityclubswfl.org.
- June 7 General Service District 9 Founders' Day Picnic, Snyder Park, 3299 SW 4th Ave., Ft. Lauderdale 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tickets \$8.00 in advance, \$10.00 at the door. Bring a newcomer and a dessert! For info. email supportyourservices@district9aa.org.
- **Sept 3-6 57th ICYPAA Convention**, Miami Trump National Doral, 4400 NW 87th Ave. Miami, FL. Registration \$30.00. Register now at: www.57thicypaa.org.
- **Aug. 12-16 59th Florida State Convention, "A Common Solution,"** Rosen Plaza Orlando, 9700 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819. Registration \$35.00 For information and registration go to www.59.flstateconvention.com.
- Oct. 3 40th Annual Broward County Intergroup Picnic, Snyder Park Caldwell Pavilion, 3299 SW 4th Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, 11:30 a.m. to Sundown. D.J., 50/50 raffle, games, dancing, volleyball, and an open A.A. Speaker Meeting. Tickets \$7.00 in advance.