



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 9
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Step Nine — *"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."*

A Letter From The Mother Of The Man I Killed

On February 20, 2001, while drinking and driving, I killed a man on a bicycle. I ran from the scene. A half hour later, I dialed 9-1-1 and turned myself in.

I had skipped work that day and started drinking in the early afternoon. At about six-thirty that evening, I left a friend's house and began my six-mile journey home. The accident happened so fast I had no time to react.

I have been incarcerated for vehicular homicide since that night. Until then--despite three drunken driving citations in eleven years--I refused to admit that I had a problem with drinking. Those previous citations added six years to my prison sentence for killing the man whom I will call "John."

The night of the accident, I swore I would never drink again *Again*. But, after a year or so of being locked up, I changed it and said I will never drink and drive again.

Two years later, I received a letter from John's brother. He said he wasn't angry with me, and he forgave me, but he wanted my perspective on what had happened that night. Not a day went by without me thinking about the accident, but writing about it made me think even more about my actions on that day. After writing the letter, I knew I had to change, but I didn't know how. My counselor had suggested AA, but I refused to go.

While lying on my bunk one Friday evening, I heard the announcement for the AA meeting. I jumped up and went. Halfway through the Preamble, I realized that the date--February 20, 2004--was exactly three years since the accident. I took this as a sign and have been active in AA and practicing the Twelve Steps ever since.

After a year in the program--and four years after the accident--I wrote another letter to John's brother. I told him I belong to AA and practice the Twelve Steps in my life. I hoped my story might reach another alcoholic, I said, and--in John's memory--save at least one family from the tragedy I had put his family through.

Ten months later, I received a miracle in the mail. This is the first page of an incredible letter I received from John's mother:

Dear James:

I am John's mother and will celebrate five years of sobriety on the twenty-second-of this month. I do not

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*Your Intergroup
Bookstore
will be closed on
Monday, September 3
in observance of
Labor Day.*

Concept IX
**Good service leadership
at all levels is
indispensable for our
future functioning
and safety.**
**Primary world service
leadership,
once exercised
by the founders,
must necessarily
be assumed by the
trustees.**

Tradition Nine - “AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

Tradition 9: Don't Tell Us What to Do! From June 1982

One of my lifelong hostilities used to be directed squarely at fraternal associations, societies, and all other kinds of organizations. It seems to have stemmed from the fact that I could not bear being told what to do or how to do it. Besides that, drinking or not, I never understood what was going on. When people talked about purposes and goals, my mind would go blank.

When I had my last drink, in 1960, and began attending meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, I came in contact with so many people that I was sure AA would turn out to be just another big organization. If so, that meant bosses, competition, and favoritism, a troika I had never been able to deal with successfully. I feared that my newfound sobriety would be short-lived.

But if AA was organized, I could not account for the absence of pressures that are regularly built into organizational structures. For example, nobody approached me with a membership application blank. Nobody told me which group to join or that I had to join any group. Once I had joined, there was no arm-twisting as to how to vote at group elections.

My first awareness of any structure in AA was in my own home group. It came at a time when we were obliged to look for new quarters. What a lot of planning was required. It was just like hunting for an apartment or a house. What part of town did we want to be in? What was the minimum space requirement? How high a rent or contribution were we able to pay?

Once we were reestablished, the group's activities got under way again. On meeting night, the door had to be unlocked and the AA sign hung out. The hospitality chairman had to see to refreshments, setting up the room, and greeting members. All the other officers at group level had their jobs to do: the group chairman, the secretary, the treasurer, and the program chairman, who booked the speakers. Officers beyond the group level had their jobs, as well: the local intergroup delegate, the institutions representative, the Grapevine representative, and the general service representative.

That's quite a lot of organizing, calling for organizational know how! Yet I cannot imagine my group's functioning for long without it or something very much like it.

Does that mean that my group is flouting the Ninth Tradition? I don't think so. The Tradition's reference is to the organizing of AA as a whole in a hierarchical, or governmental, sense. It has been my observation that groups practicing the principle of rotation usually have no trouble with the Ninth Tradition.

Rotation, one of the blessed safeguards of our Fellowship, applies not only to groups but to central offices and intergroups, committees, and boards. It provides for limited terms of office, thus assuring the next person the same chance at recovery that we had. It is also designed to help us keep the emphasis on principles before personalities by avoiding the trap of thinking we are the only ones who can do a given job. Rotation is also applied to staff assignments at GSO (the AA General Service Office). In that way, no one staff member becomes the expert on a given subject; the whole staff becomes that much more familiar with our society's problems and their solutions; and our Fellowship gains in the end.

Rotation applies throughout our general service structure. The levels of structure start with the group and move by stages to the General Service Conference. From there, they move back to the group, the solid basis from which all general or worldwide service proceeds. A capsule picture of this structure might be in order here.

If a group wants to have representation at the Conference, it elects a GSR (general service representative).

GSRs in a given district elect a DCM (district committee member). The DCMs from a given area form the area committee, where, among other activities, problems affecting the membership are gathered to be brought to the Conference. Once every two years, the GSRs and the DCMs come together in an area assembly to elect an area delegate. The delegate brings his or her area problems to the Conference but is not there solely to represent one area. Each delegate's actions and voting will be directed toward the best interests of AA as a whole.

The General Service Conference meets annually in New York. Groups in the United States and Canada send ninety-three delegates, via area assemblies, to discuss AA business. Conference discussion and its resulting Advisory Actions cover an extraordinarily wide range of subjects. Other members of the Conference are the General Service Board (trustees), the GSO and Grapevine staffs, and the boards of AA World Services, Inc., and The AA Grapevine, Inc.

Here is a very important note about the Conference. In The AA Service Manual, Bill W. wrote that "while the Conference can issue orders to the General Service Office, it can never mandate or govern the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves. The Conference represents us, but cannot rule us."

GSO is located in New York. One of the multitude of services it provides is to coordinate and arrange for the annual Conference. A trip to GSO is a memorable occasion for AAs visiting New York from all parts of the world. *(continued on pg.6)*

Local Readers Share.....

As a newcomer, I did not listen to much of anything or take suggestions, so therefore, for five years I bounced in and out of the rooms collecting white chips. When the willingness and the gift of desperation finally arrived, I was ready to follow those suggestions. Most of the readings at meetings I barely heard, much less comprehended. At first, I thought "**The Promises**" (pgs. 83-84, *Alcoholics Anonymous*) were some kind of wish list or fairy tale. Later, I zeroed in on "economic insecurity will leave us". "Oh good," I thought. "I'm going to be rich!!"

As I worked the steps with a sponsor, she pointed out the word fear: "Fear ... of economic insecurity will leave us." (pg. 84, *Alcoholics Anonymous*) Now, that has come to pass, and the promises do come true. They are not a fairy tale. They are not just a wish list.

The best description of "The Promises" I've ever heard was from two newcomers sitting in a meeting. After "The Promises" were read, one turned to the other and asked "What was that?" The other responded, "Oh 'The Promises', that's the poetry of AA."

Grateful,
Sharon G., Ft. Lauderdale

Volunteer Opportunities

2018 INTERGROUP PICNIC to be held in November

has the next planning meeting at the Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23 St., Ft Lauderdale on
Tuesday, September 25 at 6:45 PM.

2019 AA's GOT TALENT to be held in February

has the next planning meeting at the 441 Group, 1452 N. State Rd. 7, Margate on
Saturday, September 22 at 1:30 PM.

2019 INTERGROUP BANQUET to be held in April

has the first planning meeting at the Intergroup Office, 3317 NW 10 Terr., Ft Lauderdale on
Tuesday, September 18 at 6:00 PM.

2018 DISTRICT 9 GRATITUDE DINNER to be held in November

has the next planning meeting at the Pompano Beach Group, 215 S. Federal Hwy., Pompano
Sunday, September 30 at 1:00 PM

2018 DISTRICT 9 SPAGHETTI DINNER to be held in September

has ONE MORE planning meeting at Skyline Chili, 2834 N University Drive, Sunrise on
Wednesday, September 5 at 7:00 PM

Pick up a commitment today!!

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



(Continued from page 1)

know what direction this letter will take--I leave it to God to guide me. Twenty-nine years ago, I gave birth to John and, in honor of the way he lived and the loving memories I have of him, I find the right thing to do is to reach out to you. John's brother shared your letter of amends. I cannot describe the gratitude I felt and the healing that letter brought. I sobbed in my sponsor's arms and let go of so much of what I had kept inside me. Thank you. I pray that you will keep on the path of sobriety and receive God's love and forgiveness.

Her letter helped to lift a weight off of me and strengthened my faith in the AA program. A Higher Power working in my life is the only explanation. Because of my faith and trust in a Higher Power, in my sponsor, and in working the Twelve Steps, I have, for today, closed the door on my drinking as I try to carry the message of recovery and practice these principles in all my affairs.

- James B., Forks, Washington

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Come to Think of It. . .

I called Mom and Dad last night. We've been through a lot and survived. The reason is AA.

Mom and Dad haven't changed much. Dad still gives uninvited opinions on how I should be living my life. He still lectures me on how to spend my money. He still thinks nothing I say has very much importance unless it involves something in which he is particularly interested. He still drinks.

Mom still asks me when I'm going to get married and have children. She still tries to fix everything so that there is no unpleasantness in our lives. She still wears weird-looking tennis shoes I wouldn't wear to a cattle auction.

What has changed is me and my attitude about my parents. I have learned in sobriety that the greatest amends I can make to the people who love me most are living amends.

I went to my "program daddies" who taught me how to make those amends. I wrote their ideas on a piece of paper which I have been carrying in my billfold for five years. Here's what the paper says:

1. Keep your mouth shut when you feel a smart-aleck comment coming on.
2. Don't ask for advice if you don't want it.
3. Live your own life. They may or may not approve.
4. Don't tell them everything you're doing; they don't need to know.
5. They will see your growth when you live your amends and they will learn to trust you again.
6. Stop hoping for the dream parents you never had. If you want their acceptance, you must first accept them as they are.

— Kitty L., Charlotte, NC

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THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS

who helped at the Intergroup Table for the 62nd Florida State Convention

SHELDON V. SUZANNE J. ELIZABETH C. JOHN G. MARSHA MC.

DAWN L. STAN A. ADINA S. NIKKI D. HELENE H. SKIP W.

JOHNNIE F. PATTY L. SHANNON A. STEVE B. HOWIE K. DENISE J.



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

September Celebrants

Broward Men's

Angel ~ 1 yr.
Justin ~ 2 yrs.
Joe C. ~ 3 yrs.

Saturday Morning

Nadine H. ~ 9 yrs.

Pride 5:45

Lois O. ~ 43 yrs.

Sober Women of Parkland

Betsy N. ~ 7 yrs.

Women's Honesty ~ 46 yrs

Happy Destiny

Melissa M. ~ 5 yrs.

Free & Easy

Thom F. ~ 44 yrs.

Mountain Group

Lisa D. ~ 36 yrs.

Don't Forget

Bob S. ~ 36 yrs.

Sober Today

Katia L. ~ 11 yrs.

Other Notables

Peter H. ~ 21 yrs.
Scott W. ~ 25 yrs.
Carmen R. ~ 29 yrs.
Ed B. ~ 21 yrs.

Let's Do Lunch Bunch

Darius ~ 4 yrs.

Surrender is Freedom

Barbaree ~ 36 yrs.

Tuesday Night Step

Marty L. ~ 34 yrs.

Downtown Drydock

Stephanie W. ~ 3 yrs.

Free To Be

Sharon M. ~ 1 yr.
Ronna ~ 1 yr.

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.)

August Celebrants - not previously mentioned

Smell the Coffee

Joe ~ 9 yrs.
Barbara ~ 32 yrs.
Kathy ~ 40 yrs.

Express Group

Esther ~ 12 yrs.

Search for Serenity

Javier ~ 8 yrs.

Downtown Drydock

Terri S. ~ 15 yrs.
Patty M. ~ 12 yrs.

New Day

Karo ~ 10 yrs.
Jeanne B. ~ 3 yrs.
Frank M. ~ 3 yrs.

Mountain Group

Rene ~ 2 yrs.

Women's Honesty

Charmaine ~ 3 yrs.
Ruthie ~ 2 yrs.

Bottomline

John R. ~ 36 yrs.
Pam W. ~ 32 yrs.
Dan T. ~ 14 yrs.
Kara ~ 6 yrs.
John ~ 8 yrs.
Phil ~ 3 yrs.
Joe ~ 10 yrs.
Tish ~ 11 yrs.
Linda P. ~ 11 yrs.
Tom S. ~ 3 yrs.

Candlelight Meditation

Rob ~ 12 yrs.
Heather ~ 5 yrs.

Men's Independence

Nico ~ 8 yrs.



Enjoy the Journey

Billy ~ 2 yrs.

Coral Springs As Bill Sees It

Kevin ~ 5 yrs.
Barbara ~ 8 yrs.
Monica ~ 7 yrs.
Mark ~ 29 yrs.

True Self Group

Hannah A. ~ 29 yrs.

Early Risers Group

Elizabeth ~ 6 yrs.



*A bittersweet farewell
to Nancy F.*

*who is moving back to NJ
to be with family.*

*Best wishes go with her from
the staff and customers.
She was a very bright spot
in our bookstore and
she will be missed.*

BCIC - Broward County Institutions Committee

Next Meeting:

September 8 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, September 16th
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.

N A T D O T I R I

S O R P E M S I

C I B L Y E C

R S D V U I E V

G R E T N E S T D N H

S I I P E E D A N N L S B



J E R N I U

T I L E S T I H I S O

T R I M S F V I O A

T R E E S B P M E

N I V I D E N T U

N I F T I G N U C O N

Unscramble the red (or underlined) letters to fill in
the blanks for a special message...

INTERESTED IN DOING A GOOD OLD FASHIONED TWELVE STEP CALL?

We need you to sign up on our new list! Call the office or fill out the form on Page 7 with your specific information. We want to know who is really available when someone calls in need.

(Continued from page 2)

Some of us (and I used to be one) have trouble with the fact that The AA Grapevine, which publishes our monthly magazine, is incorporated and AA World Services, which publishes our Conference-approved literature, is also incorporated. I used to cite those two organizations as proof positive that AA was indeed organized. With time, I came to recognize that we AAs do not exist in a vacuum--that we are subject to local and state laws. By complying with those laws incorporating as legal entities, both the Grapevine and AAWS vastly improved their capability of serving us, which is the only reason for their existence in the first place.

The Ninth Tradition is concerned primarily with our Fellowship as a whole. But it does have a personal application, too. I must have order in my personal life, and I am willing to go to any length to secure it. The achievement of one of my paramount desires, peace of mind, seems to come about as the direct result of discipline (self-organization) in my thinking, in my emotional views, and in my spiritual outlook. My sobriety depends on the well-being and the good, orderly direction of those several aspects of my makeup.

I gained a fresh view of the Tradition one evening when I was scheduled to speak at an AA meeting. Because I had not planned my time carefully, I had to rush, and my thoughts were scattered when I arrived at the group. I heard myself say to the chairman, "Please give me a minute to get myself organized."

—W.H., Manhattan, New York

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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.

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: tradition, promises, bicycle, survived, strengthened, indispensable, injure, hostilities, favoritism, September, uninvited, functioning; celebrate the labor of your hands

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



MEETING CHANGES

Sunday

Nama-Stay Meditation is meeting again at the new location of the West Broward Club, but they have CHANGED THE TIME to 11:00 AM. Still an open meditation meeting.

Monday

Serenity Now which met at the West Broward Club in Davie NO LONGER MEETS.

Tuesday

Coral Ridge Group has changed their meeting time to 7:00 PM. Place and format remain the same.

Wednesday

Sober and Out is meeting again at the new location of the West Broward Club. CLTgw 7 PM.

Friday

Discussion Tables is meeting again at the new location of the West Broward Club. OD 7 PM.

Saturday

Welcome Home Beginners which meets at the Twelve Step House in Fort Lauderdale has changed the meeting time to 6:30 PM.

Sober Mommy and Me which met in Sunrise NO LONGER MEETS. They are currently seeking a new venue.

DAILY MEETINGS

West Broward Club now has a new location at 8396 State Rd 84 between Pine Island and University in Davie, 33324. The meeting room is upstairs at this location. **Buscando Humildad**, is meeting MWF at 8:30 PM. OSH.

Kis Lunchtime is also meeting at the new West Broward Club location. M-F at 12:30 PM. OD

Good Morning God has moved to Tamarac. All meetings are now held at 8681 W. McNab Road, 33321. Meeting times and formats remain the same.



**WISHING EVERYONE
A SAFE & SOBER
HOLIDAY WEEKEND**

Upcoming Events

- 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.
- Sept. 17** **Women's Honesty 46th Anniversary Dessert Party** St James in the Hills Church, Hollywood Desserts and Speaker, All women welcome. 7 PM
- Oct. 5-7** **South Florida Area 15 Quarterly Assembly** will be held at the Boca Town Center Marriott. This is a free weekend of workshops and speakers and a great way to learn how our third legacy works. This is how the voice of each member contributes to AA in the world.
- Oct. 13** **District 9 Archives Early Timers Meeting** NSU, 3200 S. University Drive, FL. Dessert and coffee in the cafeteria with Archives display at 6 PM. 3 speakers in Steele Auditorium to follow. Terry Building.
- Nov. 2** **District 9 Gratitude Dinner** Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, 5555 N Federal Hwy, Fort Lauderdale to benefit the GSO in NY. 6:00 PM, Tickets \$15 in advance.
- Nov. 4** **43rd Intergroup Picnic** Snyder Park in Fort Lauderdale, 11 AM - 4 PM, 2 Speakers, Lunch, Volleyball, Live Band, Face Painting \$8 in advance, \$10 at gate, Kids under 12 eat free. Quantity discounts on tickets available, ask at Intergroup 954-462-0265