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VOLUME 12
DECEMBER 2020

Step Twelve - "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

Unwrapped

This year, her gifts did not come in a box

My last drink was on March 18, 2012. It capped six months of daily blackout drinking, and more than 10 years of increasingly heavy and destructive addiction to alcohol. I then completed two and half months of outpatient rehab and underwent surgery to repair the arm I had damaged from multiple drunken falls. I was also asked not to return to the job I had held for 10 years, nor to contact any of my former coworkers. The arm injury and the loss of the job and coworkers were casualties of my drinking. I was told my liver was also damaged, but that it was mostly recoverable if I never touched a drop of alcohol again.

I attended at least one, sometimes two, AA meetings almost every day, except for the day of my surgery. With the help of a loving but firm sponsor, I worked my way through the first three Steps. By the time Thanksgiving came, I was well into admitting the exact nature of my wrongs. I had mended a lot of the damage I'd inflicted on my family, and I made living amends by being present, sober, accountable and loving.

Despite my progress in the program, I was really anxious about Christmas—and still full of self-pity. Not only would I have to cope with the usual holiday drama, but I'd have to do so without alcohol. And also without my mother, who had just lost her own battle with addiction.

It was AA—my home group and the clubhouse where my home group met, as well as my sponsor and new AA friends—that made all the difference. All this and prayer helped me accept all these feelings that flooded me: There was the grief I felt seeing my mother's empty stocking and hearing silence where her laughter used to ring; the

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Do you, or someone you know, NEED A BOOK?

Many books have recently been donated to the Intergroup office, and are available to you at no cost, while supplies last.
(Conference and non-conference approved)

Concept XII

The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Tradition Twelve “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

Smokes for Mount Saint Charles

We only wanted to take a few packs of cigarettes to the guys up at Mount Saint Charles Ranch. It was a rustic enclave for men who had to fit strict criteria--homeless, penniless, and alcoholic. A Christmas tree with packs of butts as ornaments would be decorative, and gifts for the old guys at the same time. So we put out the word, that holiday season of 1973. Give us smokes for Mount Saint Charles.

Some gave us coins to buy a pack. Others thrust a pack or two into our hands and disappeared before we could thank them. Sam G. was the oldest sober person in the area and told wonderful stories of traveling Washington State and British Columbia with AA's cofounder Bill W. in the forties. He surprised us with a carton of Lucky Strikes. "This had better be on the level," he warned in his gruff manner.

"Go on up and check it out yourself," we told him.

Whoops! Now the Al-Anons began to worry. "Do they have holiday pies, cakes, cookies, spiced cider?" Everyone got into the act. On Christmas Eve afternoon Dale and two children tied more than 400 colorful packages to the little tree with red and green yarn. Then thirty adults and a dozen youths packed two guitars and a sound system, a bazillion tins of goodies, and cigarettes on an evergreen tree. They trekked through the snow to Mount Saint Charles bearing everything but two turtledoves for a meeting and food, singing, and fellowship.

"Let's do this downtown next year." It was probably Sam G.'s idea. We did and Alkathon '74 was soon '84 and '94 and all the years in between and open twenty-four hours with round-the-clock meetings and a boundless supply of food. We won't forget the stories of Schoolteacher Warren and Pete the Roofer and others who wandered in from the street for a "free meal" and stayed to enjoy continuous sobriety.

In recent years that Alkathon has moved to a rented hall away from downtown. You need wheels to get there, they have a live-music dance, and the AA meeting room is claustrophobic. But the common room is huge, and a corner is still dedicated to the telephone where local groups take their turns answering the calls for AA's help that come in on the holiday hotline.

So it's still on the level, we muse to the spirits of the old-timers that haunt our Fellowship's gatherings, even if the drunk on the street has a hard time getting there. But, oh, forgive us if we long for one more Alkathon '73.

Recovery Word Puzzle

NIFTICUSEF
TEEMNINTIC
SLIRPCNIPE
YODHAIL
REALMITA
DITIMEL



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

NEARGIPSL
VEALDEM R
GLINCAM
SANESSO
DEARTIGUT
BESSLIPNEOR

Twelve Tips for a Sober, Joyous Holiday Season

Holiday parties without alcohol may still be a dreary prospect for new A.A.s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober. Here are some tips:

1. Line up extra A.A. activities — meetings, speaking, phone answering.
2. Entertain A.A. friends, especially newcomers.
3. Keep A.A. phone numbers with you at all times—and USE THEM!
4. Find out about special holiday parties, meetings, or other events at groups in your area, and go. If you're shy, take a newer member.
5. Skip drinking occasions you're nervous about. Remember your drinking talent for making excuses? Put it to work for you in sobriety.
6. If you must attend a drinking party, and can't find a fellow A.A. to come with you, keep some candy handy.
7. You don't have to stay late. Plan for an "important date."
8. Go to church. Any Church.
9. Don't sit around brooding. Catch up on reading, letters, walks.
10. Remember, one day at a time. Don't start now to worry about all those "holiday temptations."
11. If you can't give material gifts this year, you can give love.
12. "Having had a ..." You already know the Twelfth Step!



The bookstore is still open on a limited schedule,

Monday—Friday 1-6 PM,
with mask — one person at a time.

Place your order in advance by phone, email or online at
www.aabroward.org for shipping or come by and shop.

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



(continued from page 1)

anxiety caused by the needling of my brother-in-law; the exasperation of being tucked between my bickering niece and nephew at dinner; and the flash of disappointment when I realized I wasn't getting that eBook reader after all.

To help me get over my nearly terminal case of self-centeredness and self-pity, I engaged as best I could in service to others. Even though I have to observe a strictly gluten-free diet, I baked and brought in breakfast cookies and muffins—gluten free, of course—to brighten up our 7:30 a.m. meetings. Everyone devoured the goodies, and I felt good about this little bit of service, especially because many newcomers came in off the street and they didn't have much else to eat.

I contributed to the holiday party the AA groups were putting on for the children of members who otherwise would have faced a rather sparse Christmas or Hanukkah. It also felt good to share what little money I still had so a child would have a little holiday joy.

I chaired several meetings during December, including my home group's Christmas Eve morning meeting, which required me to really listen to others and to pay attention to everyone in the room so that those who needed to share, especially newcomers like me, wouldn't be overlooked. Hearing members share about their struggles to repair the damage from drunken holidays past and their anxieties about relapsing, really helped me feel grateful that my Higher Power had removed my obsession to drink, and that with his love and mercy, I still had my family and another chance at life.

Then, when the usual family tensions arose and I started feeling anxious, sad and afraid on Christmas Eve, I had a place to go: our holiday alcathon at the clubhouse—24 hours of AA meetings, every hour, on the hour. I went to two meetings on Christmas Eve after the family dinner, and when I couldn't sleep in the pre-dawn of Christmas morning, I went back for three more! There was something so calming about six sober drunks clustered together in a sea of chairs at 4:30 on Christmas morning, sharing about the gifts we had been given this past year. Instead of mourning my losses, or feeling sorry for myself, I was giving thanks for the gift of sobriety.

A few more people came to the 5 a.m. meeting, where we talked about the power of the Serenity Prayer during stressful times. And then when 6 a.m. arrived, so did about 60 or so alcoholics and their loved ones, for a really joyous meeting. I never expected to be sitting in an AA meeting watching Christmas morning dawn, and yet, there I was. I couldn't imagine being anywhere more perfect or more beautiful.

Not only did I survive the holidays, the holidays became even more precious to me. My self-pity dissipated and my heart swelled with gratitude and love. As I counted all the gifts I got this year, I marveled that not one of them came in a gift box or a gift bag, or in a bottle or a glass.

—SAM MARIE E. | ATLANTA, GEORGIA

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AA BIRTHDAY'S

December Celebrants

Broward Men's

Corey ~ 17 yrs.
Eric L. ~ 17 yrs.
John B. ~ 45 yrs.

Women's Honesty

Kirstie ~ 9 yrs.

Joy of Sobriety

David R. ~ 28 yrs.
Jason W. ~ 6 yrs.

Serenity Altogether

Paul R. ~ 26 yrs.

Y.A.N.A.

Sarah N. ~ 24 yrs.
Paul W. ~ 16 yrs.

One Day at a Time

Ernie B. ~ 34 yrs.

Davie Women's Group

Suzanne J. ~ 15 yrs.

Mountain Group

Mark J. ~ 23 yrs.

Sunlight of the Spirit

Tom J. ~ 32 yrs.

Margate Group

Adam B. ~ 9 yrs.
Dennis B. ~ 35 yrs.

Express Group

Nereida ~ 9 yrs.

Other Notables

Dani A. ~ 11 yrs.
Laura F. ~ 21 yrs.
Nancy F. ~ 19 yrs.
Luanne C. ~ 35 yrs.
Allison B. ~ 9 yrs.
Dennis W. ~ 20 yrs.

Imperial Pt. Sunday Nt.

Joyce D. ~ 17 yrs.
Billy D. ~ 31 yrs.
Joey C. ~ 22 yrs.

Happy Destiny

Arielle ~ 9 yrs.

Women's Step by Step

Heather M. ~ 7 yrs.
Tracy S. ~ 11 yrs.

JOIN THE BIRTHDAY CLUB!

Celebrate your sobriety by sending \$1 per every year sober to your local Intergroup office to show your gratitude and give back once a year.

(Birthday listings are not contingent upon contributions...we just like to celebrate sobriety.)

**STAY SAFE
AND
STAY HEALTHY**



November Celebrants not previously mentioned

Let's Do Lunch

Tom S. ~ 8 yrs.
Steve ~ 12 yrs.
Dan V. ~ 8 yrs.
Ray S. ~ 45 yrs.

Sunshine Group

Dan ~ 33 yrs.
Randy C. ~ 35 yrs.
Sonny ~ 35 yrs.
John ~ 36 yrs.

New Life Group

Edwin ~ 26 yrs.

Vets in Recovery

Joe K. ~ 24 yrs.

Pompano Beach Group

Donna S. ~ 34 yrs.

Perry Street South

Trudy ~ 29 yrs.

Noontime Sobriety

Al C. ~ 13 yrs.

Tuesday Nt. After Work Women's

Casey J. ~ 7 yrs.

Our Lives Are On the Line

Michael V. ~ 43 yrs.

Davie Women's

Caren L. ~ 32 yrs.

Other Notables

Mary ~ 16 yrs.
Maryann M. ~ 19 yrs.

Bros. All Living Life Sober

Scott ~ 8 yrs.
Rick ~ 25 yrs.

Tamarac Group

Gary L. ~ 23 yrs.
Donna L. ~ 23 yrs.
Jamie M. ~ 26 yrs.

Westside Men's

Steve B. ~ 7 yrs.

Downtown Dry Dock

Kim M. ~ 16 yrs.
Phyllis ~ 12 yrs.

Bikers in Recovery

Todd S. ~ 30 yrs.

No. Lauderdale Back To Basics

John S. ~ 20 yrs.

Easier Softer Way

Eddie G. ~ 38 yrs.

Surrender is Freedom

Nancy ~ 21 yrs.
Annie ~ 32 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Emmy ~ 2 yrs.
Pauline ~ 8 yrs.
Jennifer C. ~ 9 yrs.

Women's Step by Step

Sara B. ~ 7 yrs.

BCIC

Broward County Institutions Committee

will hold their next meeting on

**Saturday, December 12th
10:00 AM**

This will be a Hybrid meeting
www.bcic-aa.com

**The next
Intergroup Meeting**
will be held on Zoom

**Sunday, December 20th
at 1:00 PM**

ID: 241 331 6306 PW: 6Hzur4

AA's Got Talent, Holiday Edition



FUN.....FELLOWSHIP.....FUNDRAISING

Saturday, December 12, 2020

Log-in: 6:30 PM

Talent Show: 7:00 PM

50/50 Raffle: 8:30 PM

Tickets - \$10 per person Raffle Tickets - \$10

Deadline for Ticket Purchase: Thursday, December 10th

You will receive Meeting ID and Password the day before the event by email or text

Call Intergroup to pay by Credit Card or send payment through PayPal and mention AAGT.



*Seasons
greetings*



**We at Intergroup
wish you all a
very blessed holiday and a
New Year filled with good
health, prosperity and Joy.**

Things we cannot change.....

*Kathleen M., Denny W.,
and Robert F.*

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



Definition of Broward County Intergroup, Inc.

Your Intergroup office services all groups in the Broward County area. It is not a governing body and does not attempt to, nor can it, rule any AA Group. Its sole purpose is to act as a clearinghouse for the convenience of members and groups desiring assistance, and to extend the Twelve Step Work "carrying the message" to the sick alcoholic. The Intergroup office is supported entirely by contributions from groups, usually a specified amount each month or at intervals throughout the year.

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., Vickie T., Howie K., Lewis G., James H., Gerry B., Don W., Eric P., Tara D., Denise J., Robert M., Susan S., Drew B., David S., Bonnie T., Robert H., Sally S., Anonymous II, Michael E., Stephen W., Marlene A., Ernie F., HBeta, Brian H., Steven L., Robin S., Barbara S., Jenae R., Jerilynn D., Charmaine, Fran C., Women's Step by Step, Rachel L., Michael T., Alexander W., Gary S., Dave J., Patrick M., Patrick C., Mary C., Patsy K., Joe G., Nancy S., Al G., Ann L., Glen P., Richard M., Ali S., Erich N., Russell S., Nicolle, Kathy, Peggy, Tracy, Carmen

**WE HAVE NEVER NEEDED YOUR SUPPORT AS
MUCH AS WE DO NOW!**

Please consider becoming a faithful fiver today. Have your bank send us an Auto payment every month from your account, transfer with **ZELLE to help@aabroward.org** or

DONATE NOW ON OUR WEBSITE USING PAYPAL

ANSWERS TO PUZZLE from page 3: sufficient, incitement, principles, holiday, material, limited, relapsing, marveled, calming, Seasons, gratitude, 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



MEETING CHANGES

The 441 Group which meets in Margate has changed the 10 PM meetings to 10:30 PM on Fri. and Sat. nights.

NEW MEETING Demon Slayer meets at Fellowship Recovery Center in Margate, 5400 W. Atlantic Blvd., Saturday 8:00 PM, OST

Redeeming Grace Women's which meets in Hollywood, has changed the time from 8:30 PM to 8 PM.

Dania After Work Group has changed the time of LIVE meetings ONLY to 5 PM. Virtual meetings still at 5:30 PM.

NEW MEETING The Outsiders Gore Betz Park in Ft. Lauderdale, 1604 SW 9th Ave., Friday 8:30 PM, OD

NEW MEETING Serenity in the Park Southwest Ranches Equestrian Park, 5840 SW 148 Ave. meets 7 days a week at 5 PM.

NEW MEETING Nuts and Bolts meets at Sober Today Club, 1633 S. 21 Ave., Hollywood, Friday 7 PM, OD

Women's Journey which met at the Fourth Dimension Club on Fridays NO LONGER MEETS.

Surrender Group which met in Pembroke Pines on Tuesday nights NO LONGER MEETS.

Off the Hook which met at the West Broward Club 7 days a week now meets at Flamingo Park, 1st Building with Awning, 12855 NW 8th Street, Sunrise. All meetings are Open. Rotating format. 5:30 PM

ATTENDING GROUPS WHICH NOW MEET IN PERSON AGAIN

Each group is autonomous and every location has it's own guidelines in place. You may be asked to wear masks at all times, and you may not be allowed in due to diminished capacity.

Try to practice Love and Tolerance and remember that we are ALL affected by this pandemic!

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

We are updating our website so that Local Zoom meetings and hybrid meetings can be added to the search function and designated as such.

Once they are listed on our website, they will also show up on the Meeting Guide app. Since this added function will allow you to link right into a Zoom meeting, we will only list your group with your permission. To have your virtual meeting added to the search, please email Intergroup at help@aabroward.org.

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Dec. 12 | AA's Got Talent, Holiday Edition Another virtual evening full of talent, fun and fellowship with a holiday theme. \$10 for tickets through PayPal or calling the Intergroup office. 50/50 Raffle, too. All tickets virtual. Tickets must be purchased by December 9th—don't delay! |
| Dec. 21 | Women's Honesty Annual Stepping Stones Holiday Party will only be held virtually this year due to Covid, but group members will be dropping off gifts for the ladies on Dec. 12th. If you would like to contribute to this, you may drop your wrapped gifts at Intergroup no later than Wed., Dec. 9th. Gifts should be under \$10—no perfume or candles. |
| Jan. 21 | Sober Camping Conference has been cancelled due to pandemic restrictions at park. |