



SUITE 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

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

The Father Who Left It was many years

later that he would return to play a part in the son's sobriety

By late January of 1995, I was living in a small two-bedroom apartment. There was one bedroom for sleeping and the other for all the possessions I had managed to hang on to since selling our home two years before. In that period of time, I had spiraled downward through a number of homes of varying quality.

As I fell deeper and deeper into my alcoholism, I told everyone that I was dying from a rare blood disease. I was adamant that was my problem, not booze. I had lost almost all my friends and I had distanced myself from my wife, our two daughters, and my siblings. My mother and stepfather were deceased by then and with nowhere else really to turn, I reached out to my biological father. I called him asking for help.

My father lived in the small town of Ozark, Mo. He was blue-collar worker for the local school. He and his wife Faye had limited resources and lived just outside of town in a small but comfortable home.

When I was very small, my father was in and out of our lives. During one of his absences, my brother Glen and I were forced to live for nearly two years in an orphanage. My father had left my mother when she was pregnant with our sister, Linda, in 1950. My mother had very few resources and so, she and my sister went to live with her parents, while Glen and I went to the orphanage.

Then, one day, late in the summer of '53, my father showed up at the door while my mom was out. He came into the barely furnished apartment and picked up my sister. He sat down in the only chair we had and pulled me up onto his lap. He hugged me and cried. Glen was aloof and sullen and wouldn't allow Dad to hug him or hold him.

After an hour or so, he got up and he told us all goodbye. I cried and begged him not to go, as I watched him walk across the field to a bus stop. I watched him get on the bus. I stood there on our stoop, motionless for some time, totally devastated and heartbroken. I didn't think I would ever see him again.

So here I was 42 years later, in January 1995, flat-broke and broken and feeling terribly sorry for myself. Even though I still harbored a burning resentment against him, I called him.

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**YOUR INTERGROUP
BOOKSTORE WILL BE
CLOSED ON MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 6TH
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."

A Patron Saint of AA

I wish I could tell you that after reading the Big Book and the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* I experienced a spiritual awakening and grasped a total understanding of our Traditions. I wish I could tell you that as a GSR, DCM, and an active member of several standing committees, I have never violated the principles set forth in the Traditions. But, typically alcoholic, I gained most of my knowledge and understanding from my mistakes and through the mistakes of others. Sadly, I made most of those mistakes after several years of sobriety when I should have known better.

As a GSR at my home group, I was extremely adamant about Traditions. I tried to dictate moral behavior, told people what literature they could or could not read, and even made violent threats to one man because he was saying bad things about the group. I would run guilt trips on those who refused to get involved with service work while bragging about my own involvement.

After about a year of this self-imposed misery, I found it necessary to get back to the basics of AA. I discovered that I had forfeited my own serenity.

Being a slow learner, I found myself gradually slipping back into my old behavior. I was a DCM at the time. Controversy seemed to dominate my AA life. I was constantly engaged in heavy debate with other trusted servants over issues that were none of my business. I justified this behavior by rationalizing that I was preserving the integrity of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Today I realize that my behavior was just another example of my alcoholic thinking.

One day as I was reading the Ninth Tradition in my "Twelve and Twelve," a message was suddenly revealed to me that I had never noticed before. Even though I had read that particular chapter many times before, I had never understood its true meaning. I had always thought that it merely gave authority for the formation of a service structure. The new message had an entirely different meaning.

I suddenly realized that I had been trying to impose organization into the Fellowship. In my own way, I had been exacting my own brand of punitive action against those who I judged to be less sincere than myself. I had ordained myself as a patron saint of AA.

In prayer, I asked for forgiveness from my Higher Power. At the next area assembly I was selected to chair a meeting with the GSRs and DCMs. With all the humility I could muster, I made amends to all those present and later to those individuals who had felt the sting of my verbal whip. Finally, again in prayer, I turned my will and the care of AA over to God, as I understand him.

I found the essence of the Ninth Tradition cleverly concealed on page 174 of the "Twelve and Twelve." Bill wrote, "Great suffering and great love are AA's disciplinarians; we need no others."

To me, the Ninth Tradition epitomizes the spirit of anonymity, clarifies the Second Tradition, and provides us with an avenue through which our efforts in carrying the message of AA can have continuity, structure, and cohesiveness. It is the principle that necessitated the foundation of the Twelve Concepts. It requires that I recognize the autonomy of each group, even when I disagree with some of its policies. It will always stand as a personal reminder to me that my service to the Fellowship must come from a space of love. And finally, the Ninth Tradition will always serve as a tourniquet for this once-bleeding deacon.

Charles M., Columbia, TN

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HAVE A SAFE, HAPPY AND SOBER LABOR DAY WEEKEND!

Suite 404 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. The deadline for submission is the 15th of each month. Material may be edited for space and content. We welcome your stories, news and comments. Please send your submissions to help@aabroward.org.

(continued from page 1)

He got on a Greyhound bus and rode to Denver to be with me during my "dying days" from the "blood disease" I told him I had. He stayed with me for several days, not really knowing what to do with me and the situation he found me in.

My memory of what we talked about those days is clouded by the alcoholic darkness that permeated my being. I do remember that he was distraught and tried to pray for me. I rejected his attempts. I developed an even greater resentment while he was there because he had found God, stopped drinking and his life was better than mine.

I asked him for money and said he owed me for all those times I was alone and destitute in the orphanage and living in the poverty project housing. I was bitter. He gave me the last two hundred dollars he had in his wallet before he got on the bus to go home. I did not care that he was broke and had a 36-hour bus ride home.

I bought booze with his money, sat down in my lonely chair, drank whiskey and smugly justified my actions toward him.

In my ever-shrinking daily world inside my apartment, time moved on... And I continued to isolate and obsessively drink.

I became sicker, drunker and more pitiful each day. I teetered on the edge of death by alcohol overdose or renal failure, and fell further into self-pity.

My wife and I were somewhat estranged, but she cared enough about me in the darkest hours of my drinking to take me to the emergency room at the Veterans Hospital in Denver.

It was September of 1995 and I was nearly dead. I came out of that rehab only to relapse hard in early 1996.

Then, my brother Glen died of cancer in early April of 1996. His death had a profound impact on me because he was the first person to whom I had admitted I was an alcoholic. I entered the rooms of AA on April 18, 1996 and began a whole new life. It was a whole new journey, one that would require a fearless look at my life and all the wreckage of my past.

When I got to the Eighth and Ninth Steps, I faced my father again. It was the toughest living amends I was told I needed to make. I needed to make amends to him not only about the money, but also for the resentment and the pent-up anger toward him that I had accumulated over the years.

I could not understand why I owed him amends. After all it was he who left us to fend for ourselves years ago. Yet, somehow I knew that it was for my well-being that I try to wrap my heart and mind around making amends to him.

However, I put it off for nearly two more years, still not totally convinced. But God had other plans and he made them known through an unexpected phone call.

One day, my father's wife, Faye, called to say that her health was not good and that she was worried about my dad should something happen to her. That was the first time she and I talked directly without him being there. Faye had a beautiful heart but was pretty tough-minded too. We talked about that time when I was still drinking and my dad took the bus to see me. She told me that they really didn't have the money for him to make that trip and that they had taken the cost and the two hundred dollars he gave me out of their meager savings.

She encouraged me to finally get over the past, stand up and reach out to him.

(continued on page 6)

General Service Office, NY

P.O. Box 459
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New York, NY 10164-0371
212.870.3400

Bridging The Gap

877.207.2242

Broward Co. Intergroup, Inc.

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Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309
954.462.0265

BCIC

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

Area 15 General Service

Treasurer, P.O. Box 311
Safety Harbor, FL 34695

District 9 General Service

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

Recovery Word Puzzle

KISSTEAM
YEARHNEW
VIIPETNU
NEEDLACCO
SAILFIREC
STEALOI



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.

VECCDNINO
HUGSTOTE
EGRAME
LIFFCUNA
NIGHALE
LAPCUFEE

The PUBLISHER version we Use to make this newsletter seems to be corrupt!! Can't quite finish this section right.....sorry

**NEXT CONVENTION PLANNING
MEETING WILL BE AT THE HOTEL
on SEPTEMBER 18TH at 9:00 AM**

Florida State Convention 2022

Ft. Lauderdale Harbor Beach Marriott Resort & Spa

For more info contact Karen V. Chair2022fsc@gmail.com

**Your Intergroup
Bookstore is now
open on
Saturdays from
10 AM—2 PM**

2021 Intergroup Picnic

**PLANNING MEETING
on ZOOM**

Wednesday, September 18th
6:30 PM

Zoom ID 241 331 6306
PW 6Hzur4

**ALL 2020 INTERGROUP APPRECIATION BANQUET TICKETS
WILL BE VALID FOR THE 2021 BANQUET**

We have been helping to resell tickets for people who no longer want to go
but **NO REFUNDS WILL BE HONORED AFTER SEPTEMBER 10TH.**

(You must let Intergroup know prior to 9/10 if you want a refund, otherwise it's up to you to resell or forfeit funds)

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



A.A. Birthdays

September Celebrants

Broward Men's

Angel M. ~ 4 yrs.
Joe C. ~ 6 yrs.
Justin ~ 5 yrs.

Oakland Park

Wayne ~ 35 yrs.

Joy of Sobriety

Randall L. ~ 13 yrs.

Free and Easy

Thom F. ~ 47 yrs.

Mountain Group

Lisa D. ~ 39 yrs.

Riverside Group

Sheldon V. ~ 34 yrs.

B.A.L.L.S.

Tim B. ~ 18 yrs.
Chino ~ 20 yrs.
Alan P. ~ 36 yrs.

Into Action

Karen D. ~ 20 yrs.
Patricia M. ~ 12 yrs.

Rule 62

Frannie C. ~ 4 yrs.

Sober Women of Parkland

Betsy N. ~ 10 yrs.

Friends of Joe

Jim N. ~ 43 yrs.
Nadine ~ 12 yrs.
Collette D. ~ 34 yrs.

Happy Destiny

Melissa M. ~ 8 yrs.

Women's Honesty

Jami F. ~ 9 yrs.
Helen ~ 39 yrs.
Marissa ~ 11 yrs.

Beyond Your Wildest Dreams

Aileen W. ~ 26 yrs.

Hollywood Men's

Leon ~ 14 yrs.

Pride 5:45

Lois O. ~ 46 yrs.

Downtown Dry Dock

Kathy R. ~ 15 yrs.
Marlene A. ~ 15 yrs.
Jessica ~ 8 yrs.
Paul ~ 4 yrs.
Mitch ~ 33 yrs.
Walt ~ 38 yrs.

Tamarac Group

Barry G. ~ 26 yrs.

Focus on Sobriety

Sally D. ~ 52 yrs.
Jen L. ~ 12 yrs.
Patty K. ~ 23 yrs.

Just For Today

Mike B. ~ 22 yrs.
Eddie D. ~ 16 yrs.
Nancy A. ~ 19 yrs.

Other Notables

Scott W. ~ 28 yrs.
Ed B. ~ 24 yrs.
Peter H. ~ 24 yrs.
Katia L. ~ 14 yrs.
Carol B. ~ 31 yrs.

Don't Forget

Bob S. ~ 39 yrs.

Sunlight of the Spirit

Barbaree K. ~ 39 yrs.

Tuesday Night Step

Marty L. ~ 37 yrs.

Let's Do Lunch Bunch

Michael ~ 3 yrs.
Brett S. ~ 26 yrs.
Steve ~ 33 yrs.
Paul D. ~ 20 yrs.
Carmen R. ~ 32 yrs.
Darius ~ 7 yrs.

WOMEN'S HONESTY GROUP ~ 49 yrs.

SOBER TODAY CLUB – 10 yrs.



August Celebrants *not previously mentioned*

Men's Independence

Andy A. ~ 24 yrs.

Noontime Sobriety

Dan L. ~ 15 yrs.

Splinter Group

Lou P. ~ 4 yrs.

Oakland Park

Nicole B ~ 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,
STAY SOBER &
STAY HEALTHY
PLEASE**



BCIC

Broward County Institutions Committee
will hold their next meeting on
Saturday, September 11th
10:00 AM

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

The next **Intergroup Meeting**
will be a HYBRID meeting
Sunday, September 19th
at 1 PM

Zoom ID 241 331 6306 PW 6Hzur4
Twelve Step House
205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale

(continued from page 3)

After I hung up the phone, it all came washing over me. I felt humbled. It was as if in that moment I truly felt God whispering to me that it was time. Time to let go of the two hundred dollars that had become symbolic of my resentment.

I sat down and wrote the check and mailed it with a card, telling my dad I would try to come and see him soon. I respectfully thanked him for the loan. I searched for soft, kind words to say that I was responsible for my actions toward him.

When the check arrived in Ozark, Faye called to thank me. I realized that it must have been a burden for them to give me that money although they never said so until I broached the topic.

Faye passed away unexpectedly shortly thereafter, leaving Dad all alone and lonely. He called me to tell me the news. I could hear how heartbroken he was. I could hear the suffering, pain and loss in his voice. I made arrangements to travel to Ozark and spend some time with him.

He picked me up at the airport. He looked tired and drawn. He told me how important my visit was to him. It was clear to me how lonely he was now that Faye had left him alone here. I felt that old pain again. Then suddenly, I felt the irony that this time, after many, many lost years gone by between us, the circumstances had reversed. He needed me to be there and comfort him.

This time God had put in place all the right tools with me and with him. We spent several days together talking about the bad things and the good things in our lives. Both of us were now sober and humbled by the grace of God. We made amends to each other for past wrongs as best we could and continued to talk about it all.

We visited Faye's grave and prayed together. On Sunday, I went to the little church that my dad helped build in the small hamlet of Ponce de Leon, Mo. It was the epitome of the humble backwoods church you might read about in a story book.

I was home where I had never been before, except in my dreams and the fanciful visions of my youth.

The healing between my father and I began when I was able to see clearly that the two hundred dollars was a bridge to atonement for the two of us. I wish I could say we have a relationship that made up for all the lost years, but that was never going to be. We have a love and friendship today that is good and caring while knowing that the missing years can never be made whole.

Today, our bond comes through God's grace to both of us as we have traveled through this convoluted journey called life. It is by the grace of God that I got sober and was able to come to grips with the fact that that my resentments were impeding my progress to a peaceful and meaningful relationship with my dad. It was a big step for me, perhaps my biggest one I had to make in my life. Today our relationship is what it is. And I accept that.

Les G., Highlands Ranch, CO

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Would you or your group like to contribute a gift or basket for the **Intergroup Appreciation Banquet raffle?**

The raffle is lots of fun and what really makes the banquet a successful fundraiser for Intergroup. All items should be at Intergroup office no later than September 28th. Thank you. Call 954.462.0403 for more info.



Things we cannot change...

Mike C.

He will be missed. May he rest in peace.

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.

(Easy to set up with your bank or through PayPal)

Thank you to our Faithful Fivers and all our Contributors! You are all so appreciated!

Tom J	James H.	Brian H.	Al G.	Fred L.	Cassandre D.	Kerry W.	Ed H.	Gina B.
Liz J	Gerry B.	Steven L.	Glen P.	Laura E.	Drew B.	Marsha M.	Thomas J.	Marcy B.
Gregory C.	Robert H.	Barbara S.	Richard M.	Janine C.	Valerie J.	Maggie H.	Sandy R.	Wilma D.
Suzanne J.	Don W.	Jenae R.	Ali S.	Sheila C.	Giselle P.	Jim S.	Gayle K.	Anne B.
Bob H.	Denise J.	Jerilynn D.	Erich N.	Marilyn M.	Laurel	Javier C.	Phyllis P.	Susan O.
Anonmous	Drew B.	Charmaine	Russell S.	Elizabeth C.	Tony A.	John B.	Marcy H.	Lorna V.
Elizabeth B.	David S.	Michael T.	Nicolle N.	Chester W.	Julie L.	Arthur M.	Douglas R.	Walter B.
Ron J.	David J.	Alexander W.	Kathy	Larry C.	Amanda T.	Debra B.	Sally S.	Denis H.
Lois O.	Bonnie T.	Gary S.	Peggy D.	Robert K.	Kathryn R.	Kerry F.	Kathleen R.	George D.
Jennifer S.	Anonymous	Dave J.	Peggy G.	Jackie P.	Carla B.	Nick B.	Phillip N.	Kenneth K.
Pat R.	Michael E.	Patrick M.	Tracy S.	Dan D.	Corinne S.	Heidi A.	Charles W.	Stephen U.
Beth D.	Stephen W.	Patrick C.	Carmen D.	Robert B.	Jennifer E.	Craig S.	Emily P.	Steven S.
Craig G.	Marlene A.	Joe G.	Sharon G.	Gil W.	Michael P.	Paul A.	Christine Y.	Dianne N.
Vickie T.	Ernie F.	Nancy S.	Jeff H.	Nancy M.	Nancy N.	Robert M.	Barbaree K.	Justine H.
Howie K.	HBeta	Mary S.	Paul	Trish F.	E - Walter	Sam B.	Karen L.	Laurey T.
Sheldon V.	Ronald B.	Allison B.	Victoria M.	Robert A.	George O.	Dan M.	Michael B.	Adie M.
Stephen H.	Dennis G.	Ellen F.			Gwendolyn			

Answers from page 4: mistakes, anywhere, punitive, concealed, clarifies, isolate, convinced, toughest, meager, fanciful, healing, peaceful

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

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

Women's Honesty will begin live meetings again on 9/13 at the Hollywood Hill United Methodist Church, 400 N 35th Ave. (rear entrance), Hollywood. MASKS REQUIRED. 7:30 PM CRFw

Big Book Meditation now live again at Parishes of Sts. Francis & Clare in Wilton Manors. 7 PM OMD

Life in Recovery now meets live again at Zion Church Hall in Deerfield Beach. CLTw 7 PM.

New Way of Life is now live again at Griffin Road Church of Christ in Davie. OD 8 PM.

The Monday Night Study Group (formerly the Wednesday Night Study Group) now meets at the Church of the Nazarene, 916 NE 4th Street, Pompano Beach. OBB 7 PM.

Melrose Park Group now meets live at St. Sebastian, 2000 SE 25th Ave., Ft. Lauderdale. CSP 7:30 PM.

Tuesday

True Self Group is Today Club in Hollywood. OM 7:30 PM.

Perry Street South is now meeting live at Lambda South Club, Ft. Lauderdale. OSPD 7 PM.

Wednesday

One Day at a Time now meeting live again at St. Bartholomew Church in Miramar. 8 PM, Masks mandatory.

NEW MEETING Wednesday Night Women's meets at 6 PM, All Saints Episcopal Church. OLTW

New Life has moved back to Mitchell Moore Center, 901 NW 10 St., Pompano Beach. OD 7 PM.

Wednesday Night Study Group in Pompano has changed their name, address and time. SEE MONDAY.

Ft. Lauderdale Men's has moved to the Sanctuary, 1400 N Federal Hwy, Ft. Lauderdale and now meets live. CSPDm—New time is 7 PM.

Thursday

Fort Lauderdale Women's Group is live again at Twelve Step House, Ft. Lauderdale. CDW 12:05 PM

Serenity Sisters meets at the Pink Church (First Presbyterian) 2331 NE 26 Ave., Pompano. CRFw, 12:30 PM

New Way of Life is now live again at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Davie. OSPD 7:30 PM

Weston Steppers Women's Group now meets live again at St. Paul's Lutheran in Weston. OSTW 7 PM.

Saturday

Welcome Home Beginners now meets from 6 PM until 7:30 PM at the Twelve Step House in Ft. Lauderdale.

New Day is now meeting Hybrid at 9 AM, Herb Skolnick Center in Pompano Beach.

Sunday

Sunday Night Step Study meets at the West Broward Club, 8396A State Road 7, upstairs, Davie. OST 7 PM.

Spiritual Principles is now meeting live again at Ivanhoe Community Room in Davie. 9:30 AM.

Daily

Each Day a New Beginning now meets live again M-F at the Pride Center in Wilton Manors. ORFg 9 AM.

Free To Be now meets every day at 3:30 in person at Sanctuary in Ft. Lauderdale, 1400 N Federal Hwy.

Lunch Express now meets live at Pride Center, Wilton Manors only M-F at 12:10. ORFg

Pride 5:45 now meets live at Pride Center, Wilton Manors only M-F at 5:45. OSPg

MASKS ARE MANDATORY AT PRIDE CENTER and TWELVE STEP HOUSE

PLEASE HELP US KEEP MEETINGS UPDATED

Upcoming Events

Oct. 2 **Intergroup Appreciation Banquet** Tropical Acres on Griffin Road, must have ticket to attend. Raffles, Dinner, Speakers. 6:00-10:00 PM

Oct. 8-10 **South Florida Area 15 Assembly** will be held at Marriott Tampa Airport.

Oct. 24 **Intergroup Picnic** Caldwell Pavilion at Snyder Park in Fort Lauderdale. \$8 in advance, \$10 at gate. Live band, speakers, lunch, games. Kids under 8 eat free.