



SUITE 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

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VOLUME 8
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Step 8 - "Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

A Reminder at the Reunion

I was looking forward to a reunion with four women whom I went to high school with 50 years ago. Our weekends together had become an annual event. A stay in Maine in a lovely home surrounded by trees, flowers and blue sky was much anticipated. It was a time to come together to relive old memories and to make new ones. At times it felt like the pajama parties of the 1950's.

I was not overly concerned that they would be drinking wine. They knew of my sobriety and had been supportive. I had my literature and phone numbers. I looked forward to celebrating 35 years of sobriety in another month.

These were women that I drank with. My first experience of getting drunk happened with three of these women when we were 15. Barb (our hostess in Maine) had a babysitting job for a neighbor. She invited Lillian and me to keep her company. While Barb watched the children, Lillian and I had spotted the bottles of alcohol lining the family room wall and we decided to sample them. I felt like Alice in Wonderland with all these magic potions.

This was the first of my alcoholic drinking. For the next 18 years, I drank for effect. That was the beginning of blackout drinking, the loss of the values I had been taught, the mental obsession around alcohol and the physical compulsion after the first drink. Barb lost her job because of this, I had a hangover and a blackout and yet, I looked forward to when I could do this again! My disease progressed until my life spiraled out of control. Soon after, I arrived in Alcoholics Anonymous. I was 33 years old.

On Saturday evening, we started reminiscing about one of our classmates who was now deceased. We had bullied and teased her unmercifully. My friends chalked this up to adolescent behavior but I disagreed because I was ashamed of my part in this. As we discussed this, our hostess quietly announced that she felt she also was the target of our cruelty. This brought a hush over the room and she also announced she had forgiven us and that she loved us.

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**YOUR INTERGROUP
BOOKSTORE WILL BE
CLOSED DURING
CONVENTION.
AUG. 3—AUG. 7**

CONCEPT VIII

The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

Tradition Eight - "Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers."

In the Light of AA

Twenty minutes late and with the odor of beer trailing him at noon, a client I'll call "Brian" dropped into the office chair opposite mine. He studied his hands and mumbled something about his girlfriend being mad at him. Brian's sister had phoned me the day before. He'd started drinking again. Brian was forty-six years old with nothing to show except trouble, fines, jail, rehabs, and the recent alcoholic deaths of two friends, and he still wanted to do it his way.

When I suggested he needed to get honest about his drinking, Brian headed for the parking lot. Pacing for twenty minutes he cursed his bad luck, the condition of the world, and all the people trying to control him, while I repeated the mantra of so-called addiction professionals: "The help you need is here and in AA."

This confrontation with the full-blown active phase of the disease left me shaken. Twenty-one years sober in AA affords plenty of exposure to "live ones," but working with indigent and adjudicated clients as a professional changes the stakes dramatically.

Twelfth-Step calls I remember: A man living in a garbage-strewn apartment, whose flea-infested dog kept nudging me, begging for attention. A man lying in bed sick and reeking of sweat and the quart of mouthwash he'd drunk that day, thinking nobody would know. The man who phoned at 3 A.M., slurring his words eight hours after I'd visited his ramshackle trailer, to tell me just where I could put all that AA stuff. The woman who brought a bottle of vodka to an AA meeting, hoping someone would talk her out of breaking the seal and guzzling her first drink in two years. The drunk teenager crying and gushing self-pity and victimization at a Saturday night meeting until I insisted he come outside and talk with me.

Anyone in AA could top my list for weird encounters. Even so, most of what I know about alcoholism is what I've heard and learned from sober, recovering men and women in AA. Except for offering a handshake, a telephone number, a ride, a cup of coffee, and some words of hope, I haven't spent much time with alcoholics who couldn't make up their minds about the program. Don't want to do what we do to stay sober? No problem. Give me a call when you change your mind.

So, except for my own loss and suffering from the disease, my primary experience of alcoholism has come from people who were and are still sober. The far greater number of "still sick and suffering alcoholics" to whom we make reference before our moments of silence were largely an abstraction, a set of words. The disease itself was a negative condition from which meetings, action, and sober friends kept me safe. Those troubling albies who never seemed to "get it" usually went off to rehab or jail, or just disappeared into that vast abstraction of "the still sick and suffering."

I'd stuck with the winners in AA, so that's what I'd seen. Devastating though it is, alcoholism could be successfully treated and arrested one day at a time, and recovery could affect deep, lasting change in people's lives.

One of the changes my recovery led me to was a career in professional treatment. So now, forty hours a week, I work with clients new to sobriety--a much larger amount of time than I spend at meetings or with sober friends. Most of the alcoholics and addicts come to me as an alternative to jail, loss of job, restraining orders, divorce, loss of custody of their children, estrangement from family, living on the

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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)

Later, in my room, I thanked God for another day of sobriety. I then asked for guidance about making amends to my friend Barb for my part in destructive and hurtful behavior. I reflected that although I thought I had done the Eighth and Ninth Step, I had not been very thorough. I had tended to see myself as the victim rather than see the harm I had done others.

The following day the chance came and I was able to give a heartfelt "I am so sorry for having hurt you." I was able to share with her some of my old feelings that I had back in high school: That I had never felt good enough or pretty enough and that sobriety has given me an opportunity to become a woman of dignity and worth. I think we both experienced a sense of healing.

BY: JOAN L. | GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

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street. And from this experience of alcoholism I've learned that the catalog of suffering that compels people to seek help is much larger than the list that leaves them desperate and willing to accept it on their own. Many more alcoholics seek help, or are forced to, than really want it.

No surprise there for any AA who's been around a while. But my daily encounter with alcoholics who argue, resist, bargain, justify, rationalize, accuse, compare, judge, criticize, and otherwise deny the peril of their condition has sobered my view of the illness from which I too still suffer.

Since the ratio of my encounters has changed, and as I spend more time with still sick and suffering alcoholics than with sober, recovering ones, I'm getting to know some of the nameless men and women who slip silently into back seats as meetings begin, then line up sheepishly to get court slips signed before retreating for a waiting ride home, head bowed in confusion, shame, resentment.

Two changes I've noticed in myself since starting this job: 1) Hearing at meetings from alcoholics who are grateful and happy to be there brings back the old rush of relief I remember from early sobriety. Hearing willingness--that desperate longing for sobriety--feels like slipping into a warm bath at day's end. 2) I no longer view alcoholism as an illness characterized by recovery. Now that I see that most people don't recover, I feel sad and fearful for the many clients who cannot accept the seriousness of their condition.

Before applying to the graduate program that qualified me for my job, I consulted three people in AA who worked as professionals in the field. At some point in our conversation, each of them looked me in the eye and warned emphatically that professional work would never substitute for practicing the AA program in my own life. What none of them said--and I'm still surprised by this--is that working with newly sober alcoholics forty hours a week would increase my need for meetings and contact with sober AA people. But that's what's happened.

The more I work with "the still sick and suffering," the more I need people around me living sober one day at a time. AA meetings and relationships with longtime sober alcoholics charge my emotional batteries. They always did. But the daily encounter with the active disease forces me back to my spiritual foundation.

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General Service Office, NY

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Bridging The Gap

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BCIC

P.O. Box 22701
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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

LSDERPIA
TVPSUPREIO
NORENUI
POOCLIMSUN
LARKMEACH
NTDGINEI



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.

TREPSEEDA
NAGEDUCI
SCUTENERON
BRINNAGAGI
RUDESDEERNR
TISSRODNITO

2022 Intergroup Picnic has been reserved for Sunday, October 30th



NEXT PLANNING MEETING

will be held following the next monthly meeting at the Twelve Step House

Sunday, August 21st at 2:00 PM

Come join a committee and find out where you can do service!

Carry the Message Day is having a planning meetings on

Tuesday, August 16th and August 30th at 7 PM

at Community Presbyterian Church in Lauderdale by the Sea.

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



NEW BOOKSTORE HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Wednesday 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM

A.A. Birthdays

August Celebrants

Davie Women's

Patty L. ~ 17 yrs.

Easier Softer Way

Taryn ~ 20 yrs.

Nancy G. ~ 9 yrs.

Entirely Ready

Adie M. ~ 35 yrs.

Riverside Group

Denise J. ~ 44 yrs.

Living in the Solution

Eddie C. ~ 2 yrs.

Sam P. ~ 2 yrs.

Yechiel ~ 3 yrs.

Cayla W. ~ 3 yrs.

Steve B. ~ 5 yrs.

Bernie G. ~ 6 yrs.

Ashley F. ~ 9 yrs.

Krista A. ~ 11 yrs.

Lori B. ~ 14 yrs.

Express Group

Greg B. ~ 31 yrs.

Paul A. ~ 21 yrs.

Nick ~ 10 yrs.

Joanne ~ 34 yrs.

Vernon ~ 34 yrs.

Esther ~ 16 yrs.

Hollywood Men's

Joe A. ~ 34 yrs.

Tom ~ 27 yrs.

New Day Group

Karo ~ 14 yrs.

Jeanne B. ~ 7 yrs.

Frank M. ~ 7 yrs.

True Self Group

Hannah A. ~ 33 yrs.

Coral Springs As Bill

Sees It

Barbara ~ 12 yrs.

Monica ~ 11 yrs.

Mark ~ 33 yrs.

Kevin ~ 9 yrs.

Men's Independence

Nico ~ 12 yrs.

Serenity in the Park—SWR

Todd G. ~ 1 yr.

Barbra ~ 2 yrs.

Nancy F. ~ 4 yrs.

Alison B. ~ 6 yrs.

Mathew B. ~ 34 yrs.

Recovery on the Rocks

Jennifer R. ~ 8 yrs.

Ken ~ 26 yrs.

Fort Lauderdale Women's

Lisa M. ~ 17 yrs.

Beverly P. ~ 36 yrs.

Let's Do Lunch

Charlie G. ~ 28 yrs.

Westside Men's

Scott Z. ~ 29 yrs.

Serenity Altogether

Rick B. ~ 28 yrs.

Downtown Dry Dock

Terri S. ~ 19 yrs.

Patty M. ~ 16 yrs.

Coral Ridge Group

Erica ~ 6 yrs.

Chickee Group

Sue Y. ~ 39 yrs.

Living in the Solution—Virtual

Carolina ~ 2 yrs.

Debbie N. ~ 2 yrs.

Ron R. ~ 3 yrs.

Ruthie ~ 6 yrs.

Martin S. ~ 8 yrs.

Sally S. ~ 11 yrs.

Empowered Women

Kathy G. ~ 44 yrs.

Broward Men's

Max ~ 8 yrs.

JD ~ 8 yrs.

Will ~ 8 yrs.

Brian E. ~ 7 yrs.

Oakland Park

Don W. ~ 40 yrs.

David S. ~ 40 yrs.

Other Notables

Cassie C. ~ 11 yrs.

Sandy S. ~ 25 yrs.

Helene H. ~ 15 yrs.

Spiritual Principles

Peter G. ~ 13 yrs.

Carmen D. ~ 14 yrs.

Glenn S. ~ 22 yrs.

Linda W. ~ 39 yrs.

Express Group ~ 46 yrs

Women's Honesty

Marsha M. ~ 26 yrs.

Laura P. ~ 17 yrs.

Charmaine ~ 7 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.)

**A BIG THANK YOU
TO TIM H. FROM
NEW DAY GROUP FOR
THE NEW LAPTOP
HE DONATED.
WE ARE SO GRATEFUL!**

BCIC

Broward County Institutions Committee
will hold their next meeting on
**Saturday, August 13th
10:00 AM**

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

The next **Intergroup Meeting**
will be held on
**Sunday, August 21st
at 1:00 PM**

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



(continued from page 3)

I'm being psychically stretched. I've had to ask for a lot of help from others to hold my emotional reactions in check. I've had to broaden my thinking to keep from judging the still sick and suffering by their behavior, and to accept them for the struggling souls I am privileged to see by the light of AA wisdom. And that's another experience that's stark and new for me. Practicing the principles of AA in my life has given me that ability to see an alcoholic's recovery in them before they want it for themselves. The lies, distortions, justifications, bargaining, accusations, anger that I hear every day at work seem at times to be no more than a cocoon of emotional pain from which a tormented--but still hopeful--soul is struggling to emerge.

No one would stay in this business if it were just loss, suffering, and failure. In fact, if people didn't recover, there wouldn't be any business. That's the good news. As a professional, I'm privileged to witness miracles of recovery almost every working day, just not very many of them. So I experience as never before the very limited power of human intellect to heal or understand an illness that assails body, mind and spirit.

Uncommitted and chaotic as his life remains, my client Brian continues to come to our appointments, sober for the time being. Why, I don't know, except there's something in him that wants to survive. His hopes, dreams, and visions for himself are modest: a wife who loves him, a job as a carpenter, and a small house he wants to build upstate where people will leave him alone.

"The only thing standing between you and all of that," I tell him, "is your next drink."

Brian looks at me for a moment with the clarity of the young boy who was overtaken decades ago by the disease that afflicts his whole family. He laughs, looks down, shakes his head. When he raises his eyes, I see the suspicion, the scheming, the defiance, the "I'll show you."

"Brian," I say, practically begging, "the only difference between you and me is that I surrendered. I fought just as hard as you're fighting. But I lost the war and I gave up. I surrendered. You're still fighting. That's the only difference."

For one more moment he looks as if he believes me. He could do it, too. Then he's gone, jeering at the view out my office window of the county jail across the parking lot, where he's done time. A small piece of my heart goes with him.

—Anonymous

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***Intergroup will not be
holding a camping
conference in 2023,
despite our
hopes and earlier plans.***

Things we cannot change....

Jeanne R.



***She will be missed by all who
knew her. May she 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.	Drew B.	Kerry W.	Ed H.	Gina B.
Liz J	Gerry B.	Steven L.	Glen P.	Laura E.	Valerie J.	Marsha M.	Thomas J.	Marcy B.
Gregory C.	Robert H.	Barbara S.	Richard M.	Janine C.	Giselle P.	Maggie H.	Sandy R.	Wilma D.
Suzanne J.	Don W.	Jenae R.	Ali S.	Sheila C.	Laurel	Javier C.	Gayle K.	Anne B.
Bob H.	Drew B.	Michael T.	Kathy	Marilyn M.	Tony A.	John B.	Phyllis P.	Susan O.
Anonymous	David S.	Alexander W.	Peggy D.	Elizabeth C.	Julie L.	Arthur M.	Marcy H.	Lorna V.
Elizabeth B.	David J.	Gary S.	Peggy G.	Larry C.	Carla B.	Debra B.	Douglas R.	Walter B.
Ron J.	Bonnie T.	Dave J.	Tracy S.	Robert K.	Corinne S.	Kerry F.	Sally S.	Denis H.
Jennifer S.	Anonymous	Patrick M.	Carmen D.	Jackie P.	Jennifer E.	Craig S.	Kathleen R.	George D.
Pat R.	Michael E.	Patrick C.	Sharon G.	Gil W.	Michael P.	Paul A.	Emily P.	Steven S.
Beth D.	Stephen W.	Joe G.	Jeff H.	Nancy M.	Nancy N.	Robert M.	Christine Y.	Dianne N.
Craig G.	Marlene A.	Nancy S.	Paul	Trish F.	E - Walter	Sam B.	Barbaree K.	Laurey T.
Vickie T.	Ernie F.	Mary S.	Victoria M.	Robert A.	George O.	Dan M.	Karen L.	Adie M.
Howie K.	HBeta	Allison B.	Robert S.	Nancy G.	Gwendolyn	Stephen H.	Michael B.	
Sheldon V.	Dennis G.	Ellen F.		Deborah C.				

Answers from page 4: spiraled, supportive, reunion, compulsion, ramshackle, indigent, desperate, guidance, encounters, bargaining, surrendered, distortions

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

Tuesday

Then and Now men's meeting that was at West Broward Club in Davie on Tuesday NO LONGER MEETS.

Wednesday

Riverside Group which meets at Christ Lutheran Church on Sample in Coral Springs is now meeting at 7:15 PM and will only meet on Zoom on August 10, due to church tenting.

Saturday

Demon Slayer that met in Lauderhill at the BB&T Building NO LONGER MEETS.

Sunday

Halfway to the Next Step in Pompano at 1754 NE 50 St. has changed time to 7 PM. They meet outdoors.

Nama-stay which met at the West Broward Club in Davie NO LONGER MEETS.

Made a Decision is meeting again at SW Ranches Equestrian Park in SW Ranches. 5840 SW 148 Avenue. OBG 9:30 AM.

11th Step Beach Meeting which met at North Ocean Park in Pompano NO LONGER MEETS.

Daily

Arbol de Vida now meeting again at Cokesbury Methodist in Margate, 1800 NW 65th Ave. ODSP 8-9:30 PM

Serenity in the Park (W) meets 7 days a week at SW Ranches Equestrian Park, 5480 SW 148 Ave, Volunteer Road. ORF 5:30 PM.

Intergroup Picnic Tickets Now on Sale

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Aug. 3-7 | 65th Florida State Convention 2022 , Ft. Lauderdale Harbor Beach Marriott Resort & Spa, \$40 registration. Overflow parking with shuttle service available for commuters. Golf, Volleyball, 2 mile walk/run, Entertainment, Banquets and lots of speakers. Marathon meetings and so much fellowship. For more info go to https://65.floridastateconvention.com |
| Sept. 10 | Carry the Message Day hosted by District 9 is a free service event to showcase the many volunteer opportunities available in Broward County. Bring a newcomer and a dessert. 6-9 PM The Community Church, 4433 Bougainvillea Drive, Lauderdale by the Sea. |
| Oct. 30 | 46th Intergroup Picnic at Snyder Park, Caldwell Pavilion in Fort Lauderdale. Family fun, live music, volleyball, face painting, 2 speakers, 50/50 Raffle, 11 AM—4 PM. Tickets \$10 per person for lunch and first drink, kids under 8 eat free. Bulk ticket pricing ONLY in advance is 3/\$25. |