



SUITE 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

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VOLUME 11
NOVEMBER 2022

Step 11 - "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Moments of Being

I had my first spiritual experience in sobriety the day I went to my first meeting in 1975. I was 33 years old and had had enough. At that meeting, I didn't hear a lot of what was said, but I felt love—a love that I had never experienced before. I know that my Higher Power was in that room.

As I look back today at my 39 years of sobriety, I see so many spiritual experiences, too numerous to recount. Intermixed with these experiences were the usual life situations we all deal with like the death of loved ones and divorces. My Higher Power helped me walk through everything.

When I had about 15 years of sobriety, I found myself struggling with some PTSD rooted in abuse I experienced as a child. For many years, I had contended with depression and anxiety related to all this. I was aware that God was with me, but I did most of the leading. God became my co-pilot.

Over the years, my meeting attendance fell off a bit. But in 2009, I re-dedicated myself to serving AA and giving back what I had been so freely given. But even after that, I had become reluctant to leave the house much. I only went out three times a week for meetings and once a week for groceries. I was retired and single, with no family in town, and so, there was no one to see and nothing to do.

One day, I came across an AA slogan that said, "If God is your co-pilot, change seats." That got my attention. I determined that I was missing something in my Eleventh Step. I had worked Steps One through Nine; I took a Tenth Step inventory occasionally; and nodded at Steps Eleven and Twelve. So I revisited Step Eleven.

I found many years ago that I could practice mindfulness, a sort of meditating without sitting and closing my eyes. However, I never really considered the intent and practice of Step Eleven and what that would look like for me. I was frustrated with living with my anxieties and wanted to get closer to my Higher Power.

I considered the phrase, "self-forgetting" in the Step. The only time I

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You are invited to
attend the Intergroup
OPEN HOUSE
Sunday, November 19th
11 AM—4 PM
Holiday Sales event

Refreshments, Fellowship,
Giveaways

CONCEPT XI

The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

Tradition Eleven - "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films."

Court-Ordered AA

I am an alcoholic and a psychologist. I went to psychology school to try to find my own marbles. I got sober when I was a doctoral candidate and I found my marbles in AA. That is a long story, which I won't go into, but it has a bearing on what I do want to talk about.

I have been sober for twenty years. I have seen all sorts of treatments for alcoholism come and go. All are helpful to some degree.

I was recently talking to a recovering friend. She was telling me about her journey through DUI schools and "required" AA meeting attendance. She talked about the negative attitudes that her classmates had about AA, and about the ways they forged their slips and meeting information. It reminded me of the hundreds of people I have met in my work over the years who were alcoholic, but, when AA was mentioned, expressed a very negative response. "I went there when I was twenty-five and they made me go again when I was thirty . . ." and so on. Many of these people never gave AA another look. They had decided.

Some of these people have survived, finding sobriety in other ways. Some are just living out their alcoholism, and others are dead or jailed. One thing that I feel they all have in common is that they all appear to have been harmed by coerced attendance at AA. They experienced a forced exposure to ideas and principles before they were ready to absorb them. Later, when these ideas and principles were needed, they had already been rejected.

To me, this is a great sadness. Anyone who has sponsored a willing newcomer knows how long it can take for him to absorb new ideas, and to find substance in those ideas. The great majority of the coerced don't-or can't-even try. The rebellious nature of the alcoholic, and/or the absence of surrender, wouldn't allow them.

I can understand why agencies, courts, and treatment facilities send people to AA. It works for those who want it. Their rationale is that if we help one person out of a hundred, we have been successful. I have many friends in AA who started recovery in this manner.

But, I wonder about the other ninety-nine. These outside entities see that AA works, but they do not understand how. So AA has become a court sentence, a treatment goal, and a punitive hoop that must be jumped through in order to escape some system. I am not talking about an introduction to AA, i.e., attending a couple of beginner's meetings. Instead, requirements of up to ninety meetings are not unusual.

I am also concerned about our Traditions. Attraction rather than promotion has a great wisdom within it. In recovery, we are asked to become obedient to the unenforceable. For who can make another pray, be honest, love, pursue humility, undertake selfless giving, or practice tolerance? These are profound ideas and cannot be forced on anyone. Early recovery is a fragile enough time without changing the program into a monitored and mandatory experience.

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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)

ever experienced self-forgetting was when I could sort of drop out of my thinking. I wanted to stop all this thinking so that I could be more present in the moment and so God would have a chance to enter my life and heal my mind.

The first day I tried this went pretty well. I stood next to my dining room table and enjoyed the beauty of my tree. I don't know how long I was able to be free of thoughts, but I'm sure it wasn't many minutes. I did achieve a sense of peace, but no relief from my anxieties.

The next day, anticipating my Higher Power's presence and healing, I stood again in my dining room admiring the beauty of my tree. This time, a kind of joy built up in my heart. I laughed and I cried. I knew something was different. As the Big Book says, my whole attitude and outlook on life had changed.

It took a while to register what had happened. I noticed within a few days that my anxieties were gone. I found that I was no longer interested in spending time in thoughts of the future or the past. I saw that the present is all there is. Time revealed that I was restored to a sanity that I had never experienced.

Now, I could see how selfish I had been in so many different areas. My greatest desire was to make amends to my children to whom I had given my opinions too freely. Now I am supportive. I don't know what is best for anyone; everyone has their own path. My job is to listen and love. If anyone asks for guidance, I make certain that I am grounded in my Higher Power.

I had a spiritual experience that healed my mind and woke me from my illusions and distorted thinking. I had a spiritual awakening. Now, I live in the moment, rather than one day at a time. That is how I experience the Eleventh Step. My Higher Power directs my thoughts and my actions today. I choose that each moment.

My thinking is on a much higher plane; it is purpose-driven. I only think when I need to and if I want to stop thinking to enjoy the moment, I can. I am not seeking anything, since I am living what I always sought. I help teach my sponsees how to live in the moment. It seems that my soul's purpose has always been to connect to a Higher Power.

I feel more connected to others and love being around people. I still have a little ego left and it tries to take me for a ride occasionally, but it doesn't last long. I like to picture my ego as sitting in the corner of my mind and every now and then I have to throw it a bone. My addiction to my own thoughts has been replaced by the sounds of nature and the world.

At 72 years old, I feel young and truly alive. You can catch me giggling for no reason or exclaiming quietly before a meeting starts, "I love this meeting!" A sense of joy keeps arising from within me. I only have to be truly present to be joyful and filled with love and peace.

—ELIZABETH E. | ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

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Happy Thanksgiving!

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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
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Recovery Word Puzzle

SEENTHREMSRF
STRIDEORC
NONEECTDD
TRUETALCN
GEEKDONLW
DUELHAG



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.

NAGDIECU
DRUGDEON
TITDSDERO
DIVSVERU
DROCCEE
VENPUTII

The 46th Intergroup Picnic

Was a great success! Thank you to everyone who supported this fun Event and to all those volunteers who showed up to make it so special for the 332 people that ate lunch that day!!

Special shout out to Nancy W., and her girls for always helping and for Donating back the \$662 to Intergroup!! WOW!!

Eric P., Picnic Chair, and Committee Chairs Steve, Tim, Fritz, Patty, Bobby, Howie and Kelly did a wonderful job getting things organized and it was a wonderful day.

The 2023 [Intergroup Appreciation Banquet](#) will be having their

NEXT PLANNING MEETING

Wednesday, November 16th at 6:00 PM

at your Intergroup Bookstore, 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404, Oakland Park

**GRATITUDE
IS AN
ACTION WORD**



SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



A.A. Birthdays

November Celebrants

Broward Men's

John M. ~ 13 yrs.

Express Group

Larry C. ~ 41 yrs.

James ~ 11 yrs.

Joe T. ~ 11 yrs.

Mike ~ 8 yrs.

J.T. ~ 29 yrs.

Y.A.N.A.

Marie H. ~ 7 yrs.

Sunshine Group

Mikey M. ~ 8 yrs.

Joe K. ~ 26 yrs.

Dan I. ~ 35 yrs.

Randy C. ~ 37 yrs.

Sonny ~ 37 yrs.

John ~ 38 yrs.

Davie Women's

Jewel P. ~ 8 yrs.

Caren L. ~ 34 yrs.

Let's Do Lunch

Tom S. ~ 10 yrs.

Steve ~ 14 yrs.

Dan V. ~ 10 yrs.

Pompano Beach

Donna S. ~ 36 yrs.

Noontime Sobriety

Al C. ~ 15 yrs.

Living in the Solution

Craig G. ~ 14 yrs.

Emily L. ~ 9 yrs.

Mike C. ~ 5 yrs.

Peter V. ~ 2 yr.

Steve B. ~ 14 yrs.

Steve B. ~ 12 yrs.

Downtown Dry Dock

Kim M. ~ 18 yrs.

Phyllis ~ 14 yrs.

Serenity in the

Park—SWR

Susan ~ 13 yrs.

Samuel P. ~ 1 yr.

Frannie B. ~ 1 yr.

P.S. ~ 23 yrs.

Oakland Park Group

Joel C. ~ 41 yrs.

Damien S. ~ 17 yrs.

Ft. Lauderdale

Women's

Susan ~ 17 yrs.

True Self Group

Larry M. ~ 19 yrs.

Bonnie B. ~ 41 yrs.

Bernie B. ~ 41 yrs.

Eleventh Step Group

Maurice C. ~ 23 yrs.

Spiritual Principles

Melani S. ~ 29 yrs.

Westside Men's

Armen Z. ~ 29 yrs.

Sean M. ~ 15 yrs.

Tim A. ~ 13 yrs.

Steve B. ~ 9 yrs.

Bayview Beginners

Natalia S. ~ 7 yrs.

Bikers in Recovery

Todd S. ~ 32 yrs.

No. Lauderdale Back

To Basics

John S. ~ 22 yrs.

Lunch Bunch

Jimmy Z. ~ 17 yrs.

Cliff ~ 28 yrs.

Jennifer ~ 10 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Trish F. ~ 38 yrs.

Emmy ~ 4 yrs.

Rachel ~ 20 yrs.

Jennifer C. ~ 11 yrs.

Surrender is Freedom

Nancy ~ 23 yrs.

Annie ~ 34 yrs.

Women's Step by Step

Sara B. ~ 9 yrs.

Other Notables

Jay G. ~ 26 yrs.

Bill P. ~ 20 yrs.

Mark H. ~ 16 yrs.

Maryann M. ~ 21 yrs.

Trudy ~ 31 yrs.

Focus on Sobriety

Barbara B. ~ 26 yrs.

Empowered Women

Sue ~ 31 yrs.

Men in Recovery

Bill W. ~ 41 yrs.

Bob G. ~ 40 yrs.

Will S. ~ 13 yrs.

Stepping Out

John P. ~ 38 yrs.

Joe F. ~ 38 yrs.

Chrissy ~ 28 yrs.

Bob R. ~ 32 yrs.

Our Lives On the Line

Michael V. ~ 45 yrs.

Bros. All Living Life

Sober

Scott ~ 10 yrs.

Rick ~ 27 yrs.

Tuesday Nt. After

Work Women's

Casey J. ~ 9 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.)



**HONORING THOSE
THAT SERVED!**

BCIC

Broward County Institutions Committee will hold their next meeting on

**Saturday, November 12th
10:30 AM**

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

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

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

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

October Celebrants

not previously mentioned.....

Serenity Sisters

Dale ~ 8 yrs.

Joan ~ 27 yrs.

Free to Be

Jason E. ~ 6 yrs.

Good Morning God

June C. ~ 50 yrs.



(continued from page 3)

My home group has been struggling with this issue for months. We are spurred on by one agency that collects information on who is chairing the meeting and the topic of discussion. Their intent is to minimize the amount of forgeries of meeting slips, but they seriously underestimate the creativity of a drunk. Another agency requires not only documentation, but notes on the content of the meeting. My home group finds this compilation of data to be objectionable and finally had to address this paper-signing issue.

After several business meetings, we came to this conclusion: Immediately prior to the start of the meeting, our chairperson announces: "In a minute we will begin our AA meeting. If there is anyone here who needs a paper signed, please bring it forward now. We sign these papers as a courtesy. Many of us understand your circumstances, but AA is not affiliated with the courts or treatment programs. You are welcome to stay for our meeting if you would like."

This seems to work quite well, although we are seeing fewer papers to be signed at that meeting. Those who do come to get them signed almost always stay for our meetings. The fewer papers may well be a signal that certain agencies don't like our meeting anymore. We like it, though, and welcome any newcomer with love, tolerance, and, we hope, attraction.

One time, when I was testifying in court, the State's Attorney asked me if I thought the defendant should attend AA. I replied that I would recommend that she attend a meeting, phone AA, or read some pamphlets. The State's Attorney said, "I can make her go." I asked how. He told me that he would require documentation of attendance. I told him that he would receive in return only a list of the first names of those chairing the meetings. "Then I'll have her sponsor document her attendance," he insisted. There wasn't time to explain.

Our district has not had an active Committee for Professional Cooperation for some time. Twenty years ago, we needed to inform the medical community about how AA works. Now we need to talk to the legal and treatment systems. Perhaps they will gain some understanding of our message.

I know that I had to become attracted to AA. Fear of repercussions or outside pressure weren't enough. I either had a desire to stop drinking or I wasn't through drinking yet. If coercion worked with alcoholism, we wouldn't need AA. A diligent probation officer would be sufficient. All interventions would work, and jails would be turning out sober alcoholics.

In my opinion, coercion is counterproductive. My question is: "What about the other ninety-nine?" They are out there and many have given up on us without ever really knowing us. How can we better serve them?

TIM S. | INDIAN HARBOR BEACH, FLORIDA

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Things we cannot change....

Steven B. and Jay D.



They will be missed by all who knew them. May they 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!

Allison B.	Daniel D.	Ryan W.	Don F.	James H.	Steven S.
Anonymous	Bob B.	Shannon S.	H-Beta	Jennifer S.	Susan O.
Anonymous	Lee R.	Robert M.	Patricia C.	John B.	Suzanne J.
Beth D.	Anthony M.	Susan C.	Lorraine C.	Kerry F.	Vickie T.
Robert H.	Ashley F.	Margaret L.	Fred L.	Kerry W.	Victoria M.
Craig G.	Bill W.	Matthew S.	Jerrod F.	Marsha M.	Walter B.
Deborah C.	Charmaine D.	Travis P.	Ken J.	Mary S.	Marcy B.
Debra B.	Gregory C.	Teri B.	Katrina F.	Michael E.	Nancy G.
Dennis G.	Jan S.	Tim S.		Michael P.	Marlene A.
Don W.	Jean Marie	Tim H.		Pat R.	Sam B.
Elizabeth W.	Jeff H.	Todd G.		Phyllis P.	Sharon G.
Ellen F.	Jolynn J.	Lois M.		Robert A.	Stephen H.
Ernie F.	Joyce K.	Pat W.		Ron J.	Howie K.

Answers from page 4: refreshments, directors, contended, reluctant, knowledge, laughed, guidance, grounded, distorted, survived, coerced, punitive

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

24 Hours a Day, which met in Deerfield, has moved to Pompano Beach Community Center, 2669 N. Federal Hwy. in Pompano. OSPD 7:30 PM.

NOW Group, which met at St. Benedict's in Plantation, will NO LONGER MEET.

Bayview Beginners will begin meetings again on November 14th at St. John the Baptist Church, Community Room, 4595 Bayview Drive, Ft. Lauderdale. OBG PM

Tuesday

Sober Friends (Chevrah) which meets in a Synagogue in Davie, will not be meeting in October until the 25th, due to the Jewish holidays.

Wednesday

Monday Night Study will now be the **Wednesday Night Study**. It has changed days but will still be at the Church of the Nazarene in Pompano. OBB 7 PM.

Sober Sisters NO LONGER MEETS at Lambda South in Ft. Lauderdale.

Friday

Golden Text Group, which used to meet in Dania, now meets at the Sober Today Club in Hollywood, 1633 S. 21st Avenue (Dixie Hwy). 8 PM. OSP.

Speakeasy that met in Ft. Lauderdale NO LONGER MEETS.

Hollywood Happy Hour now meets at the Hollywood Hills Methodist Church, 400 N 35th Ave, upstairs, Hollywood. OSPD 5:30 PM

Women's Intuition, formerly of Dade County, now meets at the Sober Today Club in Hollywood, too. OCCw 7 PM.

Saturday

New Day which meets in Pompano at 9 AM is no longer Hybrid.

Free & Easy now meets again in Hollywood at 3400 N 29th Ave in the Activities Room at 9 AM. It is Hybrid.

The Little Gate that met in Wilton Manors NO LONGER MEETS.

Sunday

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church in Plantation will NO LONGER ALLOW meetings on Sundays.

Conscious Contact that was at St. Benedict's has moved to the West Broward Club in Davie. OM 7 PM.

Daily

Arbol de Vida has moved to 7660 Margate Blvd. in Margate. They will still meet daily 8-9:30 PM. OSH.

New Meeting THE BROAD HIGHWAY meets Mon—Sat at 8 PM, 1704 Buchanan Street, Hollywood.

KISS Today from Hollywood now only meets online. They are no longer at Sober Today Club.

The Broad Highway which meets Mon-Sat meets in the Paris Hall. Entrance is in alley.

Gratitud en Sobriedad which meets 7 days a week on SR7 in Ft. Lauderdale, will now meet at 8:30 PM.

La Gran Decision now meets live again in Hallandale Mon-Fri at 8 PM., 714-A S. Dixie Hwy.

Upcoming Events

Nov. 6 **Area 15—3rd Quarterly Assembly Make-up** in Sebring. One day only.

Nov. 19 **2022 Holiday Open House** will be held at the Intergroup Bookstore on Saturday, from 11 AM — 4 PM. Refreshments, giveaways, sales on selected literature and gift items, 10 - 40% off. Come do some holiday shopping while you support your local Intergroup, or show a newcomer what our Intergroup has to offer.

Apr. 29 **59th Intergroup Appreciation Dinner** - SAVE THE DATE— tickets selling fast. Must have ticket to attend. \$50, advance only. Dinner, Speakers, Basket Raffle. Tropical Acres, Dania.