



# SUITE 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

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VOLUME 1  
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**Step 1** - "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable."

## Still Powerless

### A GRAPEVINE ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

I went into the restaurant, ordered a glass of wine, and drank it. I had no real thoughts about it, no mental defense against the first drink. I had had 22 years of sobriety and lost it with one sip. My alcoholism had taken hold of me years before that. It had me before I stopped going to meetings. The first thing to go was my spiritual condition, then my sponsor, and then the meetings. For the next six years, I didn't go to meetings. I tried other things instead: church, nature, counseling, self-help books and other programs. And then I drank again.

I didn't have a clear understanding of my disease even though I had spent so many years in the rooms. I had been a teenage wonder: I got sober at 15. Over the years I was in AA, I had worked the Steps, but had not followed the directions in the Big Book.

My alcoholism had progressed while I was sober. When I picked up that glass of wine, the phenomenon of craving began immediately. The mental obsession grabbed me entirely. I wanted to prove that I wasn't an alcoholic. I wanted to drink. As that magical potion went down my throat and burned all the way to my stomach, I felt instant relief.

I was powerless all over again. All of my defects were also alive and well. My life was unmanageable, but I couldn't see it. Every time I drank, the thought, "once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic" would fly through my mind, but I would quickly suppress it with a second and third drink.

I tried to control it. I would go a few days without drinking and then reward myself with a drink. And that's how seven years went by. I lost those years to alcohol. I began to suffer physical effects: my adrenal glands were shutting down, the hair on my body fell out. I would sometimes have just one drink. But I often drank more than I intended to and those instances were getting closer and closer together.

After seven years of raising my kids in the type of home I had never intended for them, my son needed help. I could see his alcoholism, but didn't yet want to admit my own.

Finally, I sat him down and it came out. "I am an alcoholic and I once had 22 years of sobriety." I heard my own words and felt they were not

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**Make sure you  
purchase your ticket to  
the AA's Got Talent  
show before they  
sell out...  
Still only \$10 each.  
Limited seating.**

### CONCEPT I

Final responsibility  
and ultimate  
authority for A.A.  
world services  
should always  
reside in the  
collective  
conscience of our  
whole Fellowship.

**Tradition One** - "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity."

# Field of Love

Our First Tradition states: *"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity."* For each alcoholic, drinking means dying. AA means survival and life. Clearly, the group must survive or the individual will not.

Every friend who looks at AA for the first time is puzzled. They recognize that AA has an irresistible strength of purpose and action. "But how," they ask, "can such a crowd of anarchists function at all? How can they possibly place their common welfare first? What, in heaven's name, holds them together?" The answer is that Recovery, Unity and Service are the cornerstones of our Fellowship. I would like to talk about Unity.

Unity is in part achieved through communication. All over the world, we speak the language of the heart. We all need the same sayings and slogans --"Let Go and Let God," "Live and Let Live," "First Things First," "Easy Does It" --and the same Serenity Prayer.

I'd like to quote from a talk given by Christina C., of Ireland, at our last European Service Meeting, because I believe her words eloquently express some important ideas:

"It is probable that no other society or organization is as democratic and as comprehensive as AA, or has the same capacity to deal with every eventuality. This unique position is made possible by the fact that AA has *group conscience*. Article 12 of the Conference Charter, as outlined in Concept 12, stresses the importance of group conscience being reached by discussion, vote, and wherever possible, by substantial unanimity.

There are guidelines to be followed, principles to be adhered to, which, in time, achieve tolerance, discipline and humility for the members. It is an accepted fact within AA worldwide that only a small minority of members become active in service for AA. This small minority is sufficient to carry the Fellowship. They become aware of the need for an understanding of the group conscience and how it works. They are prepared to make decisions on behalf of the Fellowship without fear, even though some may not turn out so well.

Awareness is a very important word in AA language. Unity is vital and group conscience is the way to achieve it."

I believe and trust that the united group conscience shows us the right direction. Whether we are black, brown, red, white or yellow, within the compass of the Steps, the Traditions, the Concepts, and the Legacies, we are equal. Whether we live in Brussels, Buenos Aires, Sidney, Ottawa, Los Angeles, Petersburg, Reykjavik, Glasgow, Johannesburg, or Rome; whether we are Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, or nonbeliever; regardless of social standing or profession, we are equal.

Unity can be illustrated by an AA meeting held in Haifa, attended by a Palestinian man from Jerusalem, a Jewish man from Gaza, a "hippie" girl from San Francisco, a "punk" from Berlin, a new immigrant from Russia, a Shiite from Lebanon, and a pair of tourists, a man and a woman, from Finland. Most of them spoke only a little English. All were happy, because all were standing on their native soil--in the AA Fellowship. AA is an enormous field of love where the anarchy of the spirit and the mind can be transformed into democracy. AA unites nations. Most of all, it unites people.

Unity does not exist unless we work for it. The single alcoholic cannot create it; only the community of members (who know that the common welfare should come first) is capable of attaining and maintaining the unity from which springs the vital energy of AA.

ALFRED W.

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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](mailto:help@aabroward.org).

*(continued from page 1)*

said of my own accord. God had opened up my heart. I saw the truth and I knew what to do.

I grabbed my son and dragged him into a church basement jammed full of people. Utter humiliation coursed through my body, yet I was carried into that room. I really had no intention of getting sober, but God did for me what I could not do for myself. I got a sponsor and phone numbers.

Within my first days of sobriety, my life fell apart. I left my husband of 12 years. My husband and his son didn't want sobriety and my daughter was so angry that she wanted nothing to do with me. Meanwhile, my alcoholic son's drinking worsened.

This was sobriety? I asked myself. I felt I'd rather have the delusion that everything was OK. However, something inside me drove me to meetings and forced me to make calls for help.

I couldn't do it alone and prayed each morning. I trekked to three meetings a day and called three women a day. I knew that it was AA or death because I knew I couldn't stay sober through my own will. I also cannot stay sober just going to meetings, doing service work and being in the Fellowship. If I am in a state of mind that is "restless, irritable, and discontent," then I am pushing myself towards a drink. I require a spiritual experience to stay sober. I cannot change through my own will alone.

For six months, I watched a woman who had what I wanted. I asked her to lead me through the Steps. When she spoke in meetings, it sounded like a foreign language to me. I heard her say that AA was not a self-help program, it was a spiritual program. At the time, I was still self-will run riot, fighting myself at every turn and desperately trying to change myself. I had done Steps One, Two, and Three in a short amount of time. And I had begun Step Four. However, I wasn't spiritually fit and it became more about "morbid reflection" than anything else. I didn't really have a connection to my Higher Power.

I knew I was powerless over alcohol, but didn't understand why I drank. All I had were excuses: I drank because of the trauma of growing up in an alcoholic home, my unhappy marriages, the loss of money, painful emotions and the pitiful way I felt about myself.

The woman whom I had asked to be my sponsor finally agreed and we began working the Steps together. After six months of studying the First Step, highlighting things I identified with and writing my own experiences, I began to see things differently.

The truth was that I drank because I am an alcoholic. My body doesn't process alcohol the way other people's bodies do. If I am at a party and start drinking, nothing else matters. I won't put the drink down to have a piece of cake, or anything else. My mind is also different from that of the non-alcoholic: It cannot process reality. I won't remember that earlier in the day, I swore off alcohol. By 4 p.m. that afternoon, I will be at the store buying wine. In that moment, I will have no memory of the resolution not to drink or the last hangover. I will not remember that I had just spent Mother's Day on the edge of the "porcelain god," nearly passed out – another holiday ruined.

Afterward we worked on Step One, we began working on Step Two. I came to understand that this was a spiritual journey. I needed a Higher Power who could change me. It meant surrender. I had to set aside everything I thought I knew and have an open mind and a new experience of the Twelve Steps. I only know a little bit and more is being revealed to me every day.

My daughter is moving back with me in two weeks. My son is getting sober and finding his own path. I have started what I believe will be a successful business and am making it on my own. I am at peace inside my own skin for the first time in my life. I ask each day, "How can I best serve my Higher Power?" And say, "Your will, not mine, be done." I feel privileged to carry the message to other alcoholics.

—JENNIFER C. | BEND, OREGON

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# Recovery Word Puzzle

H N M N N O E P O E  
S E M F L E R O U R  
S L U G I C N O N E  
S P S P R U E S  
N E W R O D E N  
S L U N I D O E



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.

T R A I N B I D E E  
L A R D E V E E  
C R A S S T I N A H  
G A L A G E N U  
S W A N S E A R E  
G E E S I L C A

The 12th Annual **"AA's Got Talent!"** show is holding the

next **PLANNING MEETING**

**Sunday, January 8th at 4:00 PM**

at the 441 Group, Village Plaza, 1 452 N SR 7, Margate, FL



The 2023 **Intergroup Appreciation Banquet** will be having their

**NEXT PLANNING MEETING**

**Wednesday, January 18th at 6:00 PM**

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

**WE are humbly requesting donations for the raffle at our Appreciation Banquet in April.**

*Are you or someone in your group a hairdresser, nail tech or massage therapist?  
Do you have access to restaurants or vacation rentals that can be comped?*

**WE APPRECIATE ALL AND ANY SUPPORT!**



**SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER**



# A.A. Birthdays

## January Celebrants

### Spiritual Principles

Cathy M. ~ 12 yrs.  
Andy K. ~ 22 yrs.  
Ann T. ~ 26 yrs.  
Peggy G. ~ 38 yrs.  
Jayne B. ~ 29 yrs.

### Downtown Dry Dock

Larry M. ~ 11 yrs.

### Deerfield Beach

Greg B. ~ 7 yrs.

### Margate Group

Bart C. ~ 14 yrs.

### Sunday Morning Together

Mike O. ~ 32 yrs.  
Joann P. ~ 12 y

### Davie Women's

Erika T. ~ 9 yrs.

### Sunlight of the Spirit

Trish R. ~ 6 yrs.

### Serenity Altogether

Dennis M. ~ 34 yrs.

### Smell the Coffee

George M. ~ 28 yrs.  
Donna E. ~ 34 yrs.

### Alcoholics and God

Heather C. ~ 10 yrs.

### Language of the Heart

John G. ~ 38 yrs.

### Women's Step Into Sobriety

Susan C. ~ 12 yrs.

### Focus on Sobriety

Janet B. ~ 36 yrs.  
Anne B. ~ 17 yrs.  
Jean C. ~ 27 yrs.  
Randi ~ 27 yrs.  
Sherry C. ~ 26 yrs.

### 441 Group

Ebony D. ~ 15 yrs.

### Margate Group

Matt O. ~ 37 yrs.

### Riverside Group

Howie K. ~ 42 yrs.  
Nanette ~ 23 yrs.

### Pride 5:45

Steve W. ~ 37 yrs.  
Clint W. ~ 38 yrs.  
Glenn K. ~ 48 yrs.

### One Day at a Time

Mena L. ~ 21 yrs.  
Paulette R. ~ 23 yrs.

### Express Group

Bill ~ 9 yrs.  
Larry H. ~ 11 yrs.

### Sober on the Beach

David L. ~ 43 yrs.

### Women's Honesty

Regina H. ~ 29 yrs.

### Candlelight Meditation

Joe B. ~ 22 yrs.

### Welcome Home Beginners ~ 5 yrs.

### Other Notables

Debra H. ~ 27 yrs.  
Glenys H. ~ 37 yrs.  
Nancy F. ~ 22 yrs.  
Charlie C. ~ 31 yrs.  
Ed T. ~ 36 yrs.  
Meghan ~ 12 yrs.  
Mary S. ~ 41 yrs.  
Donna T. ~ 29 yrs.

### Tuesday Night Step

Don F. ~ 44 yrs.

### Women's Step by Step

Audra P. ~ 44 yrs.

### Living in the Solution

Sonia ~ 33 yrs.  
Clay ~ 28 yrs.  
Judi ~ 21 yrs.  
Bobby V. ~ 35 yrs.

### Women's Hope in Recovery

Adrienne ~ 13 yrs.

### Living in the Solution Virtual

Karen K. ~ 2 yrs.  
Victoria R. ~ 3 yrs.  
Maureen L. ~ 12 yrs.  
Frankie ~ 17 yrs.

### Y.A.N.A.

Kelly T. ~ 20 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.)*

### **Big Book Quote of the Month:**

*"Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead. A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry won't fill the bill at all."*

Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 83

### **BCIC**

Broward County Institutions Committee will hold their next meeting on  
**Saturday, January 14th  
At 10:00 AM**

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

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

**Sunday, January 22nd  
at 1:00 PM**

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

## December Celebrants

not previously mentioned.....

### Other Notables

Patricia O. ~ 36 yrs.

### Serenity Sisters

Nicole ~ 3 yrs.  
Sheila C. ~ 21 yrs.  
Sandi A. ~ 6 yrs.





# My Bartender

Another alcoholic was found dead yesterday, emaciated and slumped over the side of his chair in his living room. I knew him; he used to serve me drinks at my favorite watering hole. We had mutual appreciative disrespect for each other; in other words, we were both drunks, and the joke was that we were both losers. He was incredibly smart, with a brain that could store massive amounts of historical facts. But as with most drunks, he was not as smart as he thought.

I was a young guy when I first met him; I was not even legal to drink. I was a loner, and he was one of the few people I saw on a regular basis. Like most loner drunks, the bar was my salvation, and when I would go drink during one of his shifts, I was hoping he would acknowledge my presence with some sort of excitement or happiness, but he never did. I would over-tip him just so he would think I was a good guy. I wanted him to accept me; I wanted that whole group of drinkers who hung in the corner to take me in to their world of inebriated acceptance. I thought maybe if they took me in, that would be a sign I was not such a loser.

One day I arrived at the bar during my usual time, only there was a different guy behind the bar. The whispers were deafening: It seemed our man drank too much of the company booze and had to be let go. In quick order, all his so-called friends abandoned him with the same pity and remorse that used to fill their glasses full of free alcohol when he was working. The new guy was welcomed behind the bar with great fanfare and speculation; the old crew wondered with what level of charity the taps would flow for them. Time went on and the new guy became the regular guy, and our old friend became a myth much like the Yeti or Loch Ness Monster—sightings were everywhere, but no witnesses were ever around.

Then one Christmas morning, when the newspapers were stacked high in front of his door, a neighbor in the former bartender's apartment building notified the building superintendent. They found him dead inside. They speculated that he must have been dead for at least two weeks. This guy, whose attention I craved and whose acceptance I wanted so badly, died utterly and completely alone.

I have a wife, a beautiful home, and the most beautiful child I have ever seen. I am the most blessed man in the world. But I know my addiction is always waiting to take me back, to embrace me and befriend me. I know now that when drinking sounds good, I need to pick up the phone, go to an AA meeting and help another alcoholic.

I know my blessings are not just coincidence, they are God-given, and in order to keep them, I have to give them away to others. I do these things for the Fellowship of AA, which gave me a life. I do these things for all the people just like me, who were taken away by alcohol and left for dead, only to be found on Christmas morning.

CHRIS M.. | BUFFALO, NEW YORK

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*Things we cannot change....*

Ollie D., John B., Joe T., Debbie W.



*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.

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

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

**If you are interested in becoming a faithful fiver, you can set up automatic payments from your bank account or in PayPal. You can also send payments by Zelle to [help@aabroward.org](mailto:help@aabroward.org)**

Answers from page 4: phenomenon, remorseful, counseling, suppress, worsened, delusion, inebriated, revealed, anarchists, language, awareness, legacies

## 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](mailto: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

**Margate Men's Book Study** has moved to Fellowship Recovery Center, located at 5400 W Atlantic Blvd. in Margate. Time is the same.

### Tuesday

**Back to Basics Step Meeting** as a Wally P. series meets at the MCC (Sunshine Cathedral), 1480 SW 9th Ave., Ste. 7, Ft. Lauderdale. OSS 7 PM.

**New Day** has added a new day and meets now on Tuesday and Saturday at 9 AM. Herb Skolnick Ctr., 800 SW 36 Ave., Pompano Beach.

### Saturday

**Bottom Line Group** is adding a Joe & Charlie Big Book Study beginning on January 14th. 823 SE 8th Ave., Ste. 100, Deerfield Beach. OBB 10 AM.

### Sunday

**The Sunshine Group** which meets at the Twelve Step House is no longer Hybrid.

### Daily

**Serenity in the Park** Southwest Ranches has changed their time to **4:00 PM**, to accommodate park closing.

**Serenity in the Park** east, in Hollywood has changed their time to 5 PM, during daylight savings time.

**NEW ADDRESS** The Sober Today Club in Hollywood has moved North to Harding Street where there is no flooding in the parking lot. The new address is 2035 Harding Street, Suite 102, Hollywood. (Still on Dixie) Door to Suite 102 and parking lot are both on N 21st Avenue.

***FOR MOST CURRENT MEETING INFORMATION GO TO***

***<https://aabroward.org/locations/> or***

***<https://aabroward.org/virtual-meetings/>***

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

*Wishing you all joy, peace, good health and prosperity in 2023*



## Upcoming Events

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Jan. 13-15</b> | <b>Area 15 Quarterly Assembly</b> Hyatt Regency Sarasota. Committee meetings, speakers, third legacy.   |
| <b>Feb. 11</b>    | <b>AA's Got Talent!</b> Pompano Beach Civic Center, 1801 NE 6th Street, Pompano, Auditorium. 7-9 PM. Adult only event. Desserts, coffee and fellowship followed by live performances. Don't miss the fun. \$10. Limited capacity. Presales encouraged. <b>PLEASE BRING DESSERT AND NEWCOMER</b> |
| <b>Apr. 29</b>    | <b>59th Intergroup Appreciation Dinner</b> must have ticket to attend. Adults only. 2 Speakers, 4-course meal, raffles and fellowship. Beautiful evening out at Tropical Acres Steakhouse in Ft. Lauderdale. 6-10 PM. Limited Seating. All tickets must be purchased in advance.                |