



SUITE 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

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VOLUME 10
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Step 10 - "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

Smashing Pumpkins

On Halloween I was so busy I didn't have time to carve the pumpkin. My dad, who was drunk, decided to carve it himself. He made eyes with a scary sharpness to them, the mouth with a drunken frown. In some ways it seemed to be a portrait of M.A.D. (My Alcoholic Dad). A few days later I looked inside the pumpkin and it was rotting, but the outside looked just fine. My dad was drunk, as usual, and I felt really mad at him. I took my baseball bat and smashed the pumpkin. I told my mom that I was smashing M.A.D., My Alcoholic Dad. That's what I want to do today, smash the alcoholic, so I can get my real dad back.

When the reality of my alcoholism starts to fade in my memory, as it sometimes does, I reread what my twelve year-old son wrote shortly before a family intervention got me into recovery.

Despite my seething anger and resentment at the intervention, I entered a detox and treatment facility. I must have recognized my drinking had become a matter of life and death.

Most of us are blind to what our drinking is doing in our lives. I thought my drinking was my business, and I had every right to be myself. Drinking was as much a part of me as the color of my eyes. I felt I could judge for myself what was acceptable behavior. After all, I had good intentions. I had no desire to hurt anyone else. If I hurt myself drinking, that was just the price I had to pay. If someone else could not handle my personal choices, they could get out of my life. It seems strange now, but I did not see this attitude as self-centered at all.

Even beyond that, I believed life was made bearable only because of the relief and occasional enjoyment I got from drinking. Alcohol helped me deal with an unfair world and with my own unrecognized fears, inadequacies, and inhibitions. I had suffered many serious tragedies in my life. I was justified in drinking--you would be, too!

My form of denial was not so much that I denied I was an alcoholic. It was more that I didn't want or need to do anything about it. I almost felt it was a positive thing that I could drink the way I did. While any rational person could see I was in the depths of a disease and in critical need of treatment, I did not. I surrounded myself with people who drank the way I did and who supported my desires.

Symptoms of my disease and its consequences were certainly clear: DWIs, wrecked cars, financial losses, blackouts, insomnia, cold sweats,
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**Intergroup
will be closed on**

**Monday,
October 2nd**

**For Annual
Inventory**

CONCEPT X

Every service
responsibility should
be matched
by an equal
service authority,
with the scope of
such authority
well defined.

Tradition Ten - “Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

Mission: Tradition

I left my home group tonight feeling sad. We spent much of the meeting discussing a topic lead that quickly crossed the line in Tradition Ten: “Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues ...” The discussion started to unravel right away with the first share from a member with many years of sobriety who mentioned a radio interview of a politician proposing changes in our state’s drunk driving law. Next, a member with 11 months shared about how jail policies and rehabs should be changed. Soon others were sharing their ideas on how funding should be found for more alcohol education, about the ways gas stations display and sell alcohol, and the pros and cons of ignition interlocks. Someone then mentioned the states that are legalizing marijuana. I felt uncomfortable during the meeting, yet didn’t share about my knowledge of the Tradition.

When I did share, I tried to move the conversation around toward Step One: how each of us has to reach our own personal bottom and become willing to admit our powerlessness. It didn’t matter what the laws were, or consequences, or costs or anything else. I managed to find alcohol no matter what, and abused it regardless of what the law said. I didn’t stop drinking until I was ready. Period.

Just before our meeting closed, the youngest member in the room spoke up. “Aren’t we kind of violating Tradition Ten?” he asked. A few of us nodded our heads, and the room grew quiet. Then the meeting closed without other discussion.

I came into AA in a city where many groups were Step and Tradition oriented. Each week we would cover one Step, and the corresponding Tradition. In our small groups, people could share as much or as little on each as they wanted. So every 12 weeks we started over, coming back around to Step and Tradition One.

A few years ago, I moved to another state and started attending new meetings. I found one I liked a lot and it has become my home group. Like most meetings in this area it follows a format where, on the first week of the month, a Step is covered. The rest of the month, a volunteer chooses which topics will be discussed. Therefore, I have to wait for a whole year to have my home group discuss Step One again. This happens with all the other Steps, too. However, the Traditions are not discussed at all. It feels really out of balance for me.

I’ve made it my goal that when I volunteer to lead a meeting topic, I usually discuss one of the Traditions. Or I weave a reference to a Step or Tradition into my share when I can, trying to tie in with that week’s topic. Sometimes it’s easy; sometimes it’s hard. Many topics have little to do with a specific Step, which is what I yearn for.

I found a meeting in a nearby town where the Steps rotated faster: one week a Step, the next a Tradition, and the next a topic. This was nice, except that when we were going to cover a Tradition the following week, the same couple of members would reluctantly have to raise their

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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.

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weight loss, a seizure requiring hospitalization, and memory loss. When my right arm went numb, I didn't go to the doctor, I went to the bar and drank left-handed. There were times I went to the bar restroom to throw up or went to my car for a "power nap" and then back to the bar for another drink.

Once when I was incensed at my wife for not driving me back to the bar, I backed into my garage door without noticing it was closed. On another occasion, I broke in the door to my house when I thought my wife had taken my keys. I urinated in my sock drawer thinking it was the toilet. Another time the paramedics and police woke me on my office floor in the middle of the night. The janitor had found me and thought I was dead. My behavior jeopardized my professional license and standing, but I was not fired because I worked for myself. I thought life was unfair and unfulfilling, and the answer would be my eventual death. This was my life as an alcoholic.

But I now recognize that the worst aspect of my alcoholism was the impact it had on my family. I hurt the people I loved the most in the world. My wife suffered great worry and pain. She tried her best over many years to hold the family together, but she was helpless in dealing with an out-of-control alcoholic. Her threats at the end of my drinking were met with anger and disdain.

The effect on my three sons was even more painful. My oldest son became an alcoholic, too. He is now sober through AA. My second son, at the age of twenty, missed a turn in the road while driving drunk and killed himself in the accident. I still struggle with his loss and will always miss him. My third son wrote the "pumpkin message" above, lived through the worst of my drinking, and saw the consequences of drinking on his brothers. Nevertheless, he recently wrecked his car while driving drunk. Maybe that was the personal lesson he needed to save his life. That is my prayer.

The magic of AA is evident in my life. I started detox angry, resentful, and without any sense of a future. Through meeting with other alcoholics in AA, I began to find hope--both that I could live without drinking and, more importantly, that life without drinking might be worth living. I relate to alcoholics in a way I do not relate to others. We alcoholics share the same lifeboat. AA overcomes our differences and binds us together.

Over the years, I have grown in my commitment to the program. What has worked for me is a combination of daily attendance at meetings, consistent reading of AA literature (including the Grapevine), socializing with sober alcoholics, giving service to others, and staying spiritually connected. I try not to take myself too seriously but to take my recovery very seriously. I have learned about a kind of courage that is not controlling and self-seeking. Love has been the key for me, both the love that resulted in the family intervention that saved me and the love I have for others that motivates me now.

AA is a way to live that gives me purpose and peace of mind. I no longer need to escape through alcohol. I can be a real husband and the father my son wanted years ago. I find enjoyment in ordinary things, such as movies, sports, and reading. AA has given me another chance. I cannot adequately express my gratitude. Yet I recognize I am only one drink away from potential disaster. I never take my sobriety for granted.

BY: C. W. | STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

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Recovery Word Puzzle

Q C A N A D E S E I U I
B I T H I N O I S I N
G I S O I T I N N
D T R A O E T
Y C L A E T R L U N T
A I D N I S D



Unscramble the letters. Answers to puzzle can be found on page 7. Words for this puzzle have been used somewhere else in this

P C E A S E
X D T E O
M S A I N I O N
E H E G S T N I
R D E I N E T O
K C S T I E T

The next Gratitude Dinner planning meeting

will be held on

Saturday, October 21st at 1:30 PM

Pompano Beach Group, 110 McNab Rd, Pompano Beach, FL

Next Intergroup Picnic planning meeting

will be held on

Sunday, October 15th at 2:00 PM

12 Step House, 205 SW 23rd Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315

Things we cannot change...

Sal R, Nick L



*They will be missed by all who knew them.
May they rest in peace.*

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



A.A. Birthdays

October Celebrants

Oakland Park Group

Eric P. ~ 12 yrs.
Drew B. ~ 17 yrs.

Broward Men's

Bob A. ~ 39 yrs.
Drew ~ 7 yrs.
Larry M. ~ 27 yrs.

Express Group

Cookie ~ 36 yrs.
Sonia C. ~ 30 yrs.

Living in the Solution

Sam B. ~ 47 yrs.
Jeff R. ~ 32 yrs.
Rita V. ~ 12 yrs.
Khristina ~ 8 yrs.
Ingrid S. ~ 7 yrs.
Matt K. ~ 7 yrs.
Maureen S. ~ 5 yrs.

Free To Be

Michelle ~ 18 yrs.

Bikers in Recovery

Marisa ~ 17 yrs.

Other Notables

Ted M. ~ 44 yrs.
Jenny B. ~ 17 yrs.
Evan L. ~ 16 yrs.
Matt H. ~ 16 yrs.
Tara ~ 11 yrs.

Serenity in the Park (SWR)

Matt Z ~ 1 yr.
Chris ~ 12 yrs.
Andy ~ 8 yrs.

Freedom From Alcohol

Scott ~ 34 yrs.
Tony ~ 42 yrs.
Mimi ~ 45 yrs.
Gerry D. ~ 56 yrs.

By the Book Beginners

Randy D. ~ 35 yrs.
Shannon R. ~ 20 yrs.

In the Solution

Sam C. ~ 11 yrs.

Smell the Coffee

Mark G. ~ 15 yrs.

Willing and Able

Cassie ~ 10 yrs.

Westside Men's

Jon G. ~ 9 yrs.

Dania After Work

Alison ~ 9 yrs.

Just For Today

Paula K. ~ 7 yrs.
Steven N. ~ 6 yrs.

Women's Step by Step

Judy O. ~ 14 yrs.

Easier Softer Way

Stephanie W. ~ 7 yrs.

One Day at a Time

Barbara L. ~ 4 yrs.

Sunshine Group

Jamie R. ~ 8 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Jenn S. ~ 30 yrs.
Adina ~ 7 yrs.

Women's Step Into Sobriety

Becky ~ 12 yrs.

Sunlight of the Spirit

Dawn R. ~ 35 yrs.

Bottom Line

Mike R. ~ 33 yrs.
Dennis ~ 22 yrs.
Bianca ~ 7 yrs.

Coral Springs

Debbie C. ~ 16 yrs.

Speak Freedom Morning

Nancy H. ~ 38 yrs.

Women's Honesty

Robin K. ~ 20 yrs.
Jessica C ~ 4 yrs
Katherine C ~ 1 yrs

Y.A.N.A.

Yolanda ~ 27 yrs.

Pompano Men's ~ 54 yrs.

Downtown Dry Dock

Jason E ~ 7 yrs

Sober on the Beach

Rose ~ 7yrs

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:

"And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone — even alcohol. For this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame"

Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 84

BCIC

Broward County Institutions Committee will hold their next meeting on
**Saturday, September 9th
at 10:00 AM**

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

The next **Intergroup Meeting** will be held on
**Sunday, October 15th
at 1:00 PM**

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

.....not previously mentioned

Serenity Sisters

Carla B ~ 3 yrs
Gwen C ~ 12 yrs

(continued from page 2)

hands as silence fell on the large group (sometimes 50 people) when the chair asked for a volunteer. In our small groups, during a Tradition week, the discussion was brief, or people passed, or they just talked about something else. Some even said they just skipped the weeks when the meeting would be on a Tradition.

I missed a few weeks of this meeting, and when I came back I found they had had a group conscience. Now when someone talked about a Tradition, the small groups would not discuss it. Instead, they would just have a “here and now” conversation about, well, basically whatever was on your mind. This lasted a few months. Then, after a couple tries, the group realized it still wasn’t working. The same couple of members were still the only ones volunteering for the Traditions.

The meeting now has abandoned discussing the Traditions altogether. We will follow the same format as other meetings: a Step once a month, and the rest of the meetings will be topics. My heart sank when I learned this, and I blame myself for not being present when this was discussed.

I came into AA and moved through recovery by working the Twelve Steps. Once I got done, I circled back to the beginning. I read about the Steps in every issue of Grapevine, and when I reached the last page of the “Twelve and Twelve” or the Big Book, it just meant that I went back to start reading again from the first page. I grew up in AA with this same uninterrupted cycle.

I depend on staying sober by joining groups that stay strong, healthy and helpful. I believe they do this by observing the Twelve Traditions. I don’t stay sober by practicing topics. Sorry. I need the Steps and the Traditions, and I need to hear and talk about them frequently. I need them more than once a year. Plus, how will someone new to AA ever learn the Traditions, be able to practice them and pass them on?

I guess I have a resentment now. I will talk this over with my sponsor. Next, perhaps I’ll get a coffee pot and start a new meeting. We’ll talk about a Step and a Tradition every week. No topics allowed. Come join us!

BY: ANONYMOUS

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GET YOUR PICNIC TICKETS NOW AND SAVE

\$10/each or 3 for \$25

\$12 at the gate



SEE YOUR INTERGROUP REP OR CALL THE OFFICE!

THIS MONTH IN AA HISTORY

- ♦ Oct 3, 1945 – AA Grapevine adopted as national publication of AA.
- ♦ Oct 5, 1988 – Lois W. died.
- ♦ Oct 9—11, 1969 – 1st World Service meeting held in New York with delegates from 14 countries.

PLEASE CHECK THE LISTING OF YOUR
GROUP ON

OUR WEBSITE FOR ACCURACY

<https://aabroward.org/locations>

We are not responsible for the chair app.

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.	Jerrod 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.	Melinda
Hurbert N.	John L.	Sandra C.	Nancy V.		

Answers from page 4: Inadequacies, Inhibitions, Ignitions, Rotated, Reluctantly, Disdain, Escape, Detox, Insomnia, Seething, Oriented, Tickets

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

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 AM-12 PM _____ 12 PM-5 PM _____ 5 PM-9 PM _____ 9 PM-8AM _____

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

Coral Ridge Group which met in Fort Lauderdale NO LONGER MEETS.

Deerfield Beach Happy Hour Group NO LONGER has a Tuesday meeting.

Thursday

Free Thinkers meets at The Little Gate, 1410 NE 26th Street, Wilton Manors. 7:30 PM. OD

Friday

NEW MEETING Men's Midday Step Meeting St. Katherine Drexel Church in the Saint Vincent DePaul room, 2501 S. Post Rd, Weston, FL 33327. 12:30 PM CSTm

The Broad Highway which met daily, is now only meeting Thursdays at 8 PM. CBB



**We love our
customers!**



Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Oct 6-8 | South Florida Area 15 Quarterly Assembly , Boca Raton Town Center Marriott, Boca Raton, FL |
| Oct 14 | 38th Annual Early Timers Meeting , 101 Club, Pompano Beach, 6 PM—8 PM, coffee, dessert and 3 speakers. Free event. |
| Oct 29 | Intergroup Picnic , Snyder Park, Ft. Lauderdale, 11 AM—4 PM, Lunch, Live band, 2 speakers, Tickets \$10 in advance or 3/\$25. \$12 at gate. Kids under 6 eat free. Family fun and fellowship. Caldwell Pavilion. NO DOGS ALLOWED. |
| Nov 11 | Gratitude Dinner First Baptist Church, Broward Blvd., Fort Lauderdale. Limited seating. Must have advance ticket. |
| Nov 17– 19 | SSAASA7 Sheraton Orlando North, Orlando, FL. Service assembly. For more info go to: ssaasa7.org |