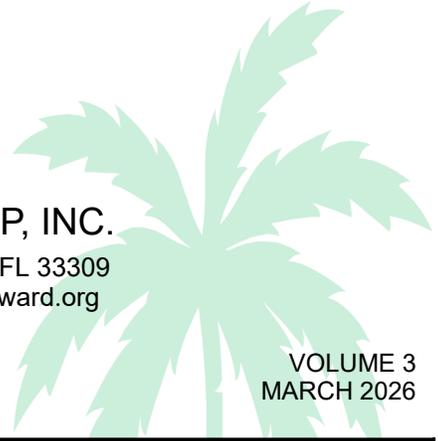




# SUITE 404

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.  
 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404, Oakland Park, FL 33309  
 Phone 954-462-0265, 954-462-7202; www.aabroward.org  
 Email: help@aabroward.org



VOLUME 3  
 MARCH 2026

**Step 3** - “Made a decision to our will and our life over to God, as we understood Him.”

## Lesson in Faith

Halfway through my fourth year in the program, I ran into some financial trouble. I had recently started freelancing as a writer and editor for a few publications and things were going well.

Then, summer hit and the work slowed and I found myself nearly completely broke. I had not done any substantial work for at least three weeks and things looked bleak.

While I continued going to meetings, calling my sponsor, and praying during this time, I just couldn't see beyond this rough patch in my life. Feeling particularly bad one July evening, I went to a meeting and a friend in the program contacted me to say that she had some money for me. She had left \$40 in an envelope for me in her mailbox. I was very grateful. After I picked up the money, I texted her to thank her.

I went to the local grocery store and spent \$20 on food to get me through the next couple of days. Somewhere between the store and my apartment, I lost the other \$20. Like the broken shoelace in the story in the Big Book, this put me over the edge. I searched my car and my apartment. I even went back to the grocery store and searched the parking lot. The money was simply gone.

When I returned home, I was very upset and sobbing. I asked aloud why this was happening to me and wondered what I had done to deserve this fate. My mind raced. I pictured myself homeless, begging on the street.

My alcoholism was on me in a big way and my perceptions were filled with doom and gloom. The pity pot began to overflow and soon I was contemplating either a drink or suicide. I was on a severe emotional jag and had completely cut myself off from the light of the spirit.

While I had been given many spiritual gifts from the program over the last four years, and the tools needed to face this difficulty

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**62nd Appreciation Banquet Tickets** are  
 NOW ON SALE  
**\$60 each**  
 ONLY 60 LEFT..ACT NOW

**CONCEPT III**

To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. —the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

**Tradition Three** - "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking."

## Without a Higher Power

This atheist "walked into our midst," and stayed.

At the age of 52, I attended my very first AA meeting on Oct. 7, 2001. I have not found it necessary to take a single drink since. Were it not for AA it's likely I would never have put together one continuous week of sobriety.

Finding all the "God stuff" in the Twelve Steps a bit hard to swallow, I immediately latched onto Tradition Three, which states, "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking."

I also had the good fortune of stumbling across a Twelve Step study during my first week of recovery. It has been my home group ever since. That was where someone drew my attention to the chapter on Step Two in the "Twelve and Twelve" where it states, "First, Alcoholics Anonymous does not demand that you believe anything. All of its Twelve Steps are but suggestions."

I also learned in my home group about a fellow called "Ed" in the essay on Tradition Three in the "Twelve and Twelve." His real name was Jimmy B. One of the pioneering members of the New York group, Jimmy B. was apparently the first diehard atheist to find lasting recovery in AA. His personal story eventually made it into the Second Edition of the Big Book as "The Vicious Cycle." An internet search turns up lots of interesting information about Jim. He is my personal AA hero.

Eventually I also discovered the pamphlet "Questions & Answers on Sponsorship" where, much to my relief, it points out that "some alcoholics have been able to achieve and maintain sobriety without any belief in a personal Higher Power." That includes me.

In an article published in the April 1961 edition of the Grapevine (reprinted in "The Best of Bill"), Bill W. laments: "Though 300,000 have recovered in the last 25 years, maybe half a million more have walked into our midst, and then out again. . . . We can't well content ourselves with the view that all these recovery failures were entirely the fault of the newcomers themselves. Perhaps a great many didn't receive the kind and amount of sponsorship they so sorely needed."

I certainly know what that's like! I ended up firing two sponsors in my first three months of recovery. The first one dogmatically insisted that I absolutely had to turn my will and my life over to the care of some kind of Higher Power if I wanted to stay sober long. My second sponsor relapsed.

Unfortunately, sponsors who actually follow the excellent suggestions outlined in "Questions & Answers on Sponsorship" seem to be about as rare as four-leaf clovers. I ended up without a sponsor for 15 months before hooking up with my current sponsor. By then I had made a lot of progress working a personalized program of recovery I had designed for myself, one that makes absolutely no reference to any kind of "Higher Power" concept--not even using my home group or AA as a whole as a substitute for God. My new sponsor's first official advice to me was, "Whatever you've been doing is obviously working well for you, so let's not try to 'fix' it."

(continued on page 7)

(continued from page 1)

lay at my feet, I was ready to throw it all out the window over money troubles.

Fortunately, all that I had learned around the tables finally kicked in. I dropped to my knees and asked my higher power, whom I choose to call God, for help. Actually, I pleaded for help. Over and over again, with tears rolling down my face, I repeated the phrase, "God, help me." A short while later, exhausted, I fell asleep.

When I woke the next morning, I felt a little better, yet still agitated. I started working on a story and when one of my sources declined an interview, I decided to take a break and went to the gym and met my sponsor for lunch and told him all that had happened. He slipped me \$20, encouraged me not to give up and told me to call him if I felt like taking a drink.

When I got home, I grabbed the leash, and took the dog for a walk, first stopping to get my mail. There was a large envelop from my health insurance provider. As I opened it, I thought it was probably just a statement of benefits from recent visits to the doctor. I couldn't have been more wrong.

A cover letter outlined that I had been overcharged for pharmaceuticals over the past six months and that included with the letter was a check reimbursing me. Even as I read it, I thought it would probably come out to be about \$10 or \$20. It turned out to be \$1700! I thought I was dreaming.

I grabbed the dog, hoisted her into the car and raced to the bank as if the checks would dissolve into thin air if I didn't deposit them promptly. After depositing them, I walked out into the parking lot, looked up at the sky and said, "Thank you, God!"

When I returned to my apartment, I got on my knees and again thanked God and asked for forgiveness for my lack of faith the night before.

I need always remember that while he may not give me what I want, he will always give me what I need. That's something else that I learned about the tables of AA.

This was a great lesson for me and really solidified my belief and faith in the program of AA. That's not to say that every time I pray for help when I am in a financial bind, that God is going to produce money to bail me out. Quite the contrary: It showed me that I need to constantly do the footwork necessary to avoid future financial pitfalls. "God will move mountains, but I need to bring the shovel."

The bigger picture here is that it is up to me to take the actions necessary to be happy, joyous and free, one day at a time. The promises do come true, if I am willing to "work for them."

—Rex R. | Tinley Park,, Ill.

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**General Service Office, NY**  
Post Office Box 2407  
James A Farley Station  
New York, NY 10116-2407

**Bridging The Gap**  
877.207.2242

**Broward Co. Intergroup, Inc.**  
3317 NW 10 Terrace, Ste. 404  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309  
954.462.0265

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

**Area 15 Treasurer**  
2950 W Cypress Creek Rd.  
Ste. 333, #10907  
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33309

**District 9 General Service**  
P.O. Box 100126  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

# Recovery Word Puzzle

SEEXTICEN  
 NASHPESIP  
 CLAIFANNI  
 VEETSUXCIE  
 TROPSNIPEEC  
 MATGONNICTLEP



Unscramble the letters.  
 Answers to puzzle can  
 be found on page 7.  
 Words for this puzzle  
 have been used some-  
 where else in this edi-  
 tion of Suite 404.

TOGSSNUGIES  
 NIPERGENIO  
 PLEESRAD  
 TIGADEAT  
 GONUPRERIT  
 CYATICPA

The 68th Florida State Convention (2026) in Orlando is only 4 months away.

**Get registered. Buy banquet tickets.**

<https://68.floridastateconvention.com/>

The next planning meeting for the **62nd Intergroup Appreciation Dinner**

will be held at the Intergroup office on

**Wednesday, March 18th at 6:30 PM.**

3317 NW 10th Terrace, Ste. 404, Oakland Park, FL 33309

The first planning meeting for the **2026 Founder's Day Picnic** will be held on

**Saturday, March 7th at 12:30 PM**

at the 101 Club, 700 SW 10th Street, Pompano Beach

The next planning meeting for the **69th Florida State Convention** (to be held in Ft. Lauderdale)

will be held at **Residences at Equality Park**, 2040 N. Dixie Hwy., Wilton Manors

on **Saturday, March 21st at 9 AM**

Volunteers are needed for over 20 committees. Come find out how you can serve.

*Would you like to help clean the Intergroup office? We are looking for volunteers who are willing and able to mop the office. Please call the office at 954-462-0403 and get on the list!*

**SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER**



# A.A. Birthdays

## March Celebrants

### Sunrise of the Spirit

Billy G ~ 40 yrs.  
Sheila F. ~ 40 yrs.  
Ellen M. ~ 35 yrs.  
Brenda M. ~ 37 yrs.

### Tamarac Group

Al K. ~ 22 yrs.

### Surrender is Freedom

Mary H. ~ 8 yrs.

### Davie Women's

#### Group

45 yrs.

### Oakland Park Group

Fred S. ~ 61 yrs.

### Victor E.

Joe G. ~ 35 yrs.

### Mountain Group

Sarah O. ~ 35 yrs.

### Sobriety on Two

Laura B. ~ 30 yrs.

### By the Book Beginners

Patrick R. ~ 35 yrs.  
Don G. ~ 18 yrs.

### Margate Group

Janet M. ~ 42 yrs.

### Express Group

Diane ~ 14 yrs.  
Tom M. ~ 36 yrs.  
David J. ~ 43 yrs.

### Women's Step Into Sobriety

Betsy B. ~ 17 yrs.  
Debbie D. ~ 12 yrs.

### Entirely Ready

Pat W. ~ 25 yrs.

### Dania After Work

Denise R. ~ 26 yrs.

### Thursday Night Study

Philip S. ~ 19 yrs.

### Friends of Pat C.

Debbie O. ~ 11 yrs.  
Peggy R. ~ 30 yrs.

### Serenity in the Park— SWR

Sarah ~ 3 yrs.  
Richmond ~ 5 yrs.  
Alberto ~ 3 yrs.  
Brigit ~ 5 yrs.



### Big Book Quote of the Month:

"Did not these feelings, after all, determine the course of our existence? It was impossible to say we had no capacity for faith, or love, or worship. In one form or another we had been living by faith and little else."

*Alcoholics Anonymous, Page 54*

### BECOME A GRATEFUL GIVER

Set up regular monthly contributions to Intergroup using Zelle, PayPal or bank draft.

### The next Intergroup Meeting

will be held on

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

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

### BCIC

Broward County Institutions Committee will hold their next meeting on

**Saturday, March 14th**  
**at 10:00 AM**

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

### District 9 General Service

Meeting will be held on

**Sunday, March 15 at 2 PM**

Sanctuary, 1400 N. Federal Hwy., FTL

**New Rep Workshop at 12:30 PM**

### FEBRUARY CELEBRANTS *not previously mentioned....*

### Serenity Sisters

Marcy H. ~ 8 yrs.  
Robin P. ~ 38 yrs.

### Surrender is Freedom

Sheryl F. ~ 25 yrs.

### Thursday Night Study

Brian H. ~ 38 yrs.

### Dania After Work

Gary C. ~ 23 yrs.

**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE  
CELEBRATING A SOBER  
ANNIVERSARY THAT WOULD  
LIKE TO BE LISTED HERE?**

Let us know, [help@aabroward.org](mailto:help@aabroward.org)

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**FEBRUARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

GROUP NAME	FEB	CYTD
545 Happy Hour		325.00
Alcoholics Anonymous	392.00	1,305.36
Back to Basics	100.00	100.00
Boca Men's Group	183.40	183.40
Brothers in Sobriety	100.00	100.00
Coral Springs Group	25.00	50.00
Daily Reflections with Pride		524.86
Dania After Work	180.00	180.00
Each Day a New Beginning	2,085.00	2,085.00
Early Riser Group		400.00
East Naples Men's	817.00	817.00
Fort Laud Twelve Step	500.00	500.00
Fort Laud Women's	25.00	25.00
Ft Laud Primary Purpose	100.00	100.00
Freedom From Alcohol		100.00
Good Morning God	50.00	100.00
IN Memorium		1,500.00
Intergroup Meeting	134.00	296.00
Into Action	90.00	90.00
KISS Today	213.30	213.30
Lambda Rising		125.00
Life in Recovery	70.00	70.00
Living in the Solution	465.00	465.00
Living in Solution Virtual	97.00	173.00
Living Sober	100.00	100.00
Lunch Bunch Plantation		140.00
Made a Decision	5.45	5.45
Mid Day Sobriety		100.00
New Beginnings	265.76	265.76
New Way of Life	100.00	100.00
Noontime Sober Living		400.00
Oakland Park Group	146.00	527.00
Old Timers Group		205.00
One Day at a Time	99.90	99.90
Open Door		253.00
Peace of Mind Group		303.84
Pembroke Pines Last Stand	222.00	222.00
Plantation Happy Hour	705.35	705.35
Riverside Group		72.00
Rule 62		105.00
Sandpebbles	200.00	200.00
Saturday Morning Group		50.00

GROUP NAME	FEB	CYTD
Serenity Hour	109.13	109.13
Serenity in the Park-SWR	225.00	360.00
Smell The Coffee Group		10.37
Sobriety 101	49.00	49.00
Spiritual Principles		0.00
Spiritual Principles Lambda		150.00
Splinter group		744.00
Sunrise Serenity		116.66
Surrender is Freedom		20.00
The Anonymous Group	139.05	139.05
The Outsiders		204.30
Traditions & Steps at 7p	7.00	42.00
Tuesday Nt. Step Group	83.00	83.00
University Big Book	80.00	80.00
Victor E	750.00	750.00
Westside Men's Group		527.65
Why It Works		162.00
Women's Primary Purpose	46.00	46.00
Women's Sober Tribe		25.00
Women's Step by Step	120.00	120.00
You Are Not Alone	230.00	230.00
You're Off the Hook		308.99
TOTALS	9,309.34	17,959.37

**Thank you, thank you,  
thank you!**

**For all our customers, volunteers and  
members who do so much to  
participate and support us at  
Intergroup, we really  
appreciate you.**



(continued from page 2)

After years of studying the Twelve Steps in my home group and discussing them with my sponsor, I now understand why faith in "God as we understood Him" was so vitally important to Bill W. and most of the AA pioneers.

As clearly explained by Dr. Harry Tiebout in the appendix of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, they nearly all suffered from some form of narcissism. Their narcissism had effectively blocked their recovery from alcoholism and eventually turned them into low-bottom drunks of the "hopeless variety."

The obvious cure for rampant narcissism and grandiosity is greater humility; and as it says in the essay on Step Seven in the "Twelve and Twelve," "the attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of AA's Twelve Steps."

However, as Dr. Silkworth points out in "The Doctor's Opinion," "The classification of alcoholics seems most difficult." Ultimately, he tells us, all alcoholics "have one symptom in common: they cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving." That certainly describes me. All of us do have issues of our own that we need to deal with if we are to stay both sober and happy, often issues that "the attainment of greater humility" simply will not touch.

The program of recovery I work directly addresses my issues. The only person in the world it needs to work for is me, and it does that very, very well. Today I am not only sober, I am far happier than I had ever dreamed it was possible for me to be.

I now have a dozen sponsees of my own. Four of them, like me, are atheists who have absolutely no use for the Higher Power concept. Two of those have already enjoyed over four years of continuous sobriety.

Obviously I do not insist that my sponsees must all work the same program of recovery, nor do I tutor them in the program of recovery I designed to address my own issues--"defects of character," if you wish. Instead, I encourage each of them to follow my example by identifying their own issues, and then working a deliberate, systematic, active program of recovery designed by themselves, for themselves, to directly address their issues.

Over the years I have endured a lot of criticism from other AAs for my unorthodox beliefs, especially for my refusal to endorse the Twelve Steps as a perfect one-size-fits-all program of recovery for every alcoholic. But if Bill W. were alive today, I'm sure he would approve. As he suggested in the long form of Tradition Three, "Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover."

That certainly includes me. My fondest hope is that if enough others follow my example, someday it will include millions more like me who previously might have "walked into our midst, and then out again."

— GREG H., San Diego, Calif.

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*For each petal on the Shamrock.. This brings a wish your way...  
Good health, good luck and happiness, for today and every day. Irish Blessing*

Answers from page 4: existence, happiness, financial, executives, perceptions, contemplating, suggestions, pioneering, relapsed, agitated, intergroup, capacity

### **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.

## [MEETING CHANGES](#)

Where and Whens are now being printed in-house, so they are always current. The majority of changes we receive every month are for online meetings, and as always the website has the most up-to-the-minute information available.

<https://aabroward.org/locations> or <https://aabroward.org/virtual-meetings>

### Monday

**10 & 11 at 7** which met at Sober Today Club in Hollywood at 7 PM NO LONGER MEETS.

### Wednesday

**The Turning Point** which met at Sober Today Club in Hollywood at 10:30 AM NO LONGER MEETS.

### Friday

**The Margate Group** which meets at the 441 Room no longer has their Friday Speaker meeting.

**NEW MEETING Bleeding Deacon Young People** meets at St. John's Episcopal, 1750 Buchanan St., Hollywood. OSPYP 8 PM.

### Saturday

### Sunday

**Positively Sober** which met at the Lambda South Club in Ft. Lauderdale at 6:30 is NO LONGER HYBRID. It now meets only online.

**The Acceptance Meeting** in Deerfield will now be meeting at Zion Lutheran School Hall. 6 PM. OD.

### Daily

**NEW MEETING On Awakening** meets at 7 AM Mon—Fri at the Stirling Room in Davie. OD

**Daily Dose** that met at Sober Today Club in Hollywood at noon NO LONGER MEETS.



## [Upcoming Events](#)

- Apr. 10-12**    **South Florida Area 15 Assembly** Boca Raton Marriott, speakers, workshops and business meeting with third legacy on Sunday.
- Apr. 26**      **62nd Intergroup Appreciation Dinner** Tropical Acres, 2500 Griffin Road, Dania, 4 PM — 8 PM, must have ticket in advance, \$60, 4 course meal, 2 speakers, basket raffle.
- May 7-10**    **Big Book Seminar 2026**, presented by the Paul Revere Group in the spirit of "Joe and Charlie". Boca Raton Town Center Marriott. Register online [www.bigbookseminar.org](http://www.bigbookseminar.org)
- June 7**        **Founder's Day Picnic** Snyder Park, Fort Lauderdale 11 AM—4 PM . Hosted by District 9.