

# THE COURIER

Naples Area Intergroup  
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## The Circle & Triangle

"When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically." -Big Book page 64 (When it says "physically", please keep in mind that this includes the physical world around us.) For me, the circle & triangle represents the Alcoholics Anonymous solution to alcoholism. It is a perfect overview of our three-part answer (unity, recovery, & service) to our three-part disease (physical, mental & spiritual).

The foundation of this triangle (which the solution built up-recovery. The set of 12 spiritual principles associated with recovery are contained in the 12 Steps (which are located in the Big Book, pages 1 - 164; and then talked about in the 12 & 12, pages 15 - 125). The part of the disease that it treats is the mental. The left side of this triangle is unity, which can be found in fellowship with other AA's. The set of 12 spiritual principles associated with unity are contained in the 12 Traditions (which are located in the 12 & 12, pages 129 - 192). The part of the disease that it treats is the physical. And the right side of this triangle is service, which can be found in carrying the message and, with unselfishness & love, contributing inside and outside of AA. The set of 12 spiritual principles associated with service are contained in the 12 Concepts (which are located in the booklet "Twelve Concepts for World Service"). The part of the disease that it treats is



the spiritual (remember that the Big Book says on pages 14 - 15 that "we perfect and enlarge our spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others", and on pages 14, 76, 88 & 93 it says, "Faith without works is dead"). Also, notice that the sides of the triangle are all equal in size, which means that not only do I need to be living in all three areas but that I need to incorporate all three proportionately. I have seen many people go back out who were using LESS THAN all three parts, but I have NEVER seen ANYONE return to drinking who was living in ALL THREE. I've heard people refer to it as a three-legged stool. If all three legs are there then the structure is solid, but if one or two legs are missing then what is supporting me is shaky and I am sure to fall. If together as one. There are times when these principles spill into each other because the lines between them are blurred (like, it could be said that all of the Steps lead to our awakening to the awareness of spirit, or service Traditions that can be used in all of our affairs). But if we want to stay on the "Road of recovery, peace of mind, joy, usefulness and "a way of life that is incredibly more wonderful as time passes". It doesn't matter how long it's been since our last drink. What matters is how close we are to our next one. How can we tell if like to be? We can get a good indication every few months (as part of taking personal inventory) by ask ourselves, "Am I participating equally in all three branches of the AA solution?" If our answer is, "YES!", we will know

as best we can if we are still on the beam in AA's design for living. At the 20th Anniversary Convention which is AA circumscribing the world. Within it is a triangle. The base of the triangle is the foundation of recovery on which we stand. The left of the triangle symbolizes our unity, and the right of the triangle our arm of service. Such is the symbol of AA. I first saw it in Norway in 1950, but this symbol is not new with us. We have attributed a particular significance to it but in actuality its significance is very old. Students of ancient

symbol by which evil spirits could be kept away, and may that symbol ever stand guard over the society of Alcoholics Anonymous." This symbol is also an ancient spiritual symbol for wholeness of body, mind and spirit; or "Oneness". On May 21, 1993, AA World Service released an unsigned document titled: "Follow up

Statement Regarding Use of the Circle/ Triangle Symbol." In it, AAWS stated that "Alcoholics Anonymous in and on its literature, letterheads and other material." That action has generated a considerable amount of discussion because it was taken without a conference action or a "group conscience". I hope you can see the significance of the Circle and Triangle and please let others know (especially people you work with) about its representation of the 36 spiritual principles in AA's solution to alcoholism that leads to integrity on the personal, group, and service level.

Barefoot Bill

**STEP THREE:** *“Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.”*

**TRADITION THREE:** *“The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.”*

**TRADITION THREE: (Long Form)** “Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought AA membership ever depend on money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.”

**CONCEPT THREE:** “As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the AA General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional ‘Right of Decision.’”

*3RD Step Prayer: “God, I offer myself to Thee- To build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always! Amen”*

## TRADITIONS—CHECKLIST

This is a Checklist for Tradition THREE.  
Reprinted with permission from Service  
Material from the General Service Office:

1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
5. Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangement?

## One Man's Third Step

In the first two Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous we admit our powerlessness and begin to believe that there might be a power that can restore us. I recall "sanity" was invalid in my case because I doubted such a time ever existed in my life. "In your case 'restored' may mean 'put way you to be,'" This view very help-time for "Made a turn our under-Some theorize that not amount to very much. But the dictionary makes it very clear: ***"decision – the act of reaching a conclusion or making up one's mind."*** It marks the transition from the reluctant "We admitted" in Step 1, through the "Coming to" of Step 2, to the assertive action of Step 3. When I phoned my sponsor about Step 3, I asked: "What is this God s\*\*t?" His reply was a key factor in saving my life. He asked simply: "Are you going to work the rest of the Steps?" I confirmed I certainly would, and he said "Then you have done Step 3." Many say that one of the greatest contributions AA has made to society is the phrase *"as we understood Him."* Some argue the wording should have been gender neutral; but, we have to consider the history. Early A.A. was struggling to ensure not that it was gender-appropriate but that it was religion-passive. Pre-AA, other recovery groups had adopted a specific religious stance which led to problems – not only with those potential members

STEP ③

back the were meant he replied. has been ful. Then it's Step 3: decision to will and stood Him. " members

who held different beliefs, but also with religious bodies protecting their domains. AA literature reflects the efforts by the founders to get acquiescence from religious entities that AA did not pose a threat to them. Many religions are organized; AA is not (Tradition 9). This "non-organization" grants every individual AA member his or her freedom: to select a higher power similar to that in a religion, to develop an entirely personal view, or indeed to choose an amorphous form. So Step 3 grants us the liberty to pick any higher power, and perhaps more importantly, to allow that concept to grow and change with time. This liberty is part of what sets AA apart from religion. The Big book explains that: "... we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing." (Personally, I shorten this to *"There isn't any not-god."*) On page 62 it explains: "Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God makes that possible. And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without His aid." From this we can see that *complete loss of self is the individual goal*. We do this by working all Twelve Steps and by being of service. It can be challenging to "turn over" our lives to an intangible power; often the newcomer is helped in Step 3 by using the idea of "letting go" instead. For some, it is easier to let the selfish self slip away. Often simply eliminating the use of the word "my" allows release from the illusions of control, separation and personal ownership. An AA friend who is also an ordained minister is often asked "what is God's will?" He replies that only one aspect is clear to him: "God wants me to stay sober today." Step 3 is the crystallization of Step 2. The rest of the steps make tangible the results of our profound decision.

Roger N.

**look back and be grateful.**

**look ahead and be hopeful.**

**look around and be helpful.**

### Principles

*If the man be agnostic or atheist, make it emphatic that he does not have to agree with your conception of God. He can choose any conception he likes, provided it makes sense to him. The main thing is that he be willing to believe in a Power greater than himself and that he live by spiritual principles.*

-Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 93

## AA Is Not Group Therapy

I have attended AA meetings for fifteen years, but in the past few years I've left many meetings with an uncomfortable feeling. Why did I feel disturbed? What had happened? I unearthed the answer to those questions at a popular lunch meeting I had been urged to attend.



A woman at this standing-room-only meeting began to talk about her mother and the damage her mother had caused in her life. She wept and damned her mother and blamed her for all of her unhappiness. There was no talk of sobriety. No hint of gratitude. No reference to working the Steps. Then this woman left the meeting early. I wanted to stop her and bring her back and tell her to listen. She just might find the answer to her problems.

At that moment, I realized with disturbing clarity that this was group therapy, not an AA meeting. What I had just been part of was what I believe to be the subtle sabotage of the AA program. This woman was just one of many people who are misguidedly using meetings to dump all their feelings and resentments in the name of sharing.

My intention is not to minimize anyone's grief. I speak as one who grew up in an extremely abusive alcoholic family, as a man who is a Vietnam vet, a survivor of divorce and other traumatic losses. I have attended therapy at various times and found it quite useful. However, I don't confuse therapy with AA's Twelve Steps and am disturbed as I see people increasingly using AA meetings for free therapy, in order to "get in touch with their feelings." My own primary purpose at a meeting is to better learn to apply the AA Twelve Step philosophy to the problems of daily life.

This intrusion of therapy talk in meetings causes a loss of focus on what this program is all about. The basic principles of recovery, honesty, open-

mindness, and willingness are being replaced with self-absorption, attention-getting, and getting in touch with feelings. Instead of enlisting the principles of gratitude and acceptance, many are focusing on blaming in the name of sharing feelings. The Big Book states, "Acceptance is the answer to all of my problems today." That simple principle, acceptance, is what we are neglecting when we allow meetings to become therapy.

I hear people who've been around the program for over a year still "working on" a problem and then blaming their unhappiness on this still-unresolved problem. People are blaming everything that's not going right in their lives on ex-spouses, lousy parents, the government, or their bosses. Less time needs to be spent on complaining about the problem and more time needs to be focused on solutions. The solutions live in the application of the Twelve Steps.

"Acceptance is the answer to all of my problems today." As long as people are blaming they're not working the Twelve Steps and as long as they're not working the Twelve Steps they will continue to use meetings as therapy. They will continue to dilute the higher purpose of this program, which is to share our experience, strength, and hope. Let's work the Steps and keep the therapy talk out. We know it works.

-- Craig R., Carnation, Washington  
Reprint Permission, AA Grapevine, February, 1994

**Brown Bag Group Breakfast**  
**9am, Sunday, March 18**  
**Sugden Park, All Welcome**  
**Chef prepared scrambled eggs!**

Please bring breakfast food, a chair, hat/  
sunscreen and good attitude.





## LETTING GO of ANGER

In recovery, we often discuss anger objectively. Yes, we reason, it's an emotion we're all prone to experience. Yes, the goal in recovery is to be free of resentment and anger. Yes, it's okay to feel angry, we agree. Well, maybe . . .

Anger is a powerful and sometimes frightening emotion. It's also a beneficial one if it's not allowed to harden into resentment or used as a battering ram to punish or abuse people.

Anger is a warning signal. It points to problems. Sometimes, it signals problems we need to solve. Sometimes, it points to boundaries we need to set. Sometimes, it's the final burst of energy before letting go, or settling in.

And, sometimes, anger just has to be usually confined to a tidy package. And it need not cause us to stifle ourselves or our energy.

We don't have to feel guilty whenever we experience anger. We don't have to feel guilty.

Breathe deeply. We can shamelessly feel all our feelings, including anger, and still take responsibility for our behaviors.

***I will feel and release any angry feelings I have today. I can do that appropriately and softly.***



## Rule 62

### Heavenly Smoke & Coffee

A guy dies and goes to heaven. Upon arrival, he meets Peter at the Golden Gates. Peter asks the fellow, "So, where do you belong?"

The gentleman replies, "I don't know." Peter says, "Let's look around and see if we can find where you fit in."

Peter opens the first door and there are many people kneeling and Hail Mary's. "Who are they?" the gentleman asks. "Those are the Catholics," Peter replies. "I don't belong there," says the man.



Peter opens up the second door and there are people praying on the ground. "Who are they?" asks the guy. Peter tells him they're the Muslims.

"No," he repeats, "I don't belong there either."

Peter then opens up a third door. Smoke, the smell of cof-

### Tater People

Some people never seem motivated to participate, but are just content to watch while others do the work. They are called "Spec Taters".

Some people never do anything to help, but are gifted at finding fault with the work. They are called "Comment Taters".

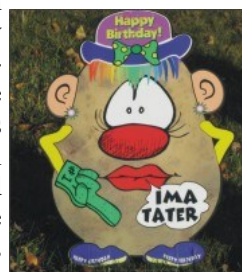
Some people are like to tell others don't want to soil their own hands. They are called "Dick Taters".

Some people are cause problems to agree with them. It is too hot or too cold, too sour or too sweet. They are called "Agie Taters."

There are those who say they will help, but somehow just never get around to actually doing the promised help. They are called "Hezzie Taters."

Some people can put up a front and pretend to be someone they're not. They are called "Emma Taters."

Then there are those who love others and do what they say they will. They are always prepared to stop whatever they are doing and lend a helping hand. They bring real sunshine into the lives of others. They are called "Sweet Taters."



## Carrying our Message to South Asia

On a recent trip to India and Bhutan I had an opportunity to see Alcoholics Anonymous both thriving (India) and non-existent (Bhutan). I went to some great meetings in Kolkata (aka Calcutta) and Delhi. At one, an Indian member celebrated 25 years. Over 100 attended and many sounded just like the old-timers in Arizona or New York. Why would this surprise me, since we all read the same Big Book?

In the past, meetings I've attended (in Beijing, Hong Kong, Hanoi, Saigon, Vientiane, Siem Reap, Chiang Mai, Kathmandu, and were dominated by Westerners -- Brits, Aussies, Europeans.



the Asian meetings I've attended (in Kong, Hanoi, tiane, Siem Mai, Kath-Bangkok) by Americans, and West But mem-are doing

the deal on their own, and seem to be doing a great job of it. With a population well over one billion, there must be a few alcoholics in India! Bhutan is different. It is an isolated country of less than one million in the Himalayas. Tourism and roads are relatively new. In my pre-trip research I could not find any meetings listed there. I did find one hospital with a detox unit in Thimphu, the capital, however, and I went there. The attendants were a little hesitant to let me speak to the patients. They directed me to the psychiatrist in charge, who was extremely welcoming and wrote me a note telling the attendants to let me speak to the patients. He told me there have been some attempts to get AA going in the country, but the meetings did not seem to sustain themselves. A short while later seven patients, male and female, were brought into a conference room along with some of the staff to meet with me. What did I say? I told them why I considered myself an alcoholic, how I recovered, and encouraged them to follow suit. I mentioned that there was a great opportunity to start AA in Bhutan. They could reach out to AA people in India for help. Then the patients spoke in turn of their struggles with alcohol and drugs. Hopefully one day soon there will be regular AA meetings in Bhutan and these patients can share in what Bill and Dr. Bob discovered about how we recover, one alcoholic speaking to another. We can do together what we could not do alone. I do not know if any of the people I spoke with in January are still sober, but I know I felt God's presence as I walked back to my hotel in Thimphu that afternoon. I also had some great tourist experiences in Bhutan and India -- going to the Mother Theresa House in Calcutta, hiking to the Tigers Nest in Pero, Bhutan, seeing the Sikhs feed thousands at their temple in Delhi, and witnessing people bathing in the Ganges River. But meeting the AA members in India and speaking to the people in detox in Bhutan were highlights of my trip. Alcoholics Anonymous has doubled the rewards of my travel by combining tourism and recovery.

Dan S., Prescott Valley

## Sponsorship... we all do it differently

I don't really know if I am a good sponsor or not. I just copy what I've learned from the sponsors I've had over the years. But I do know that I have a 100% success rate. No matter what anyone I



have sponsored has done, I've stayed sober. This includes men leaving A.A. and getting on with their lives; leaving A.A. and dying drunk, or as a result of an alcohol-related illness or accident; or leaving A.A. and winding up serving a life sentence for a violent third strike committed while sober. I've also been fired by a number of sponsees who somehow manage to stay sober without me. Sometimes it was a simple: "This isn't working." At other times it was a long and confusing explanation. And at times they just kind of "went away," and ignored my texts or phone calls. As a rule I stop trying to get in touch with people after three attempts. (A lesson I learned in Al-Anon: After three times it's nagging.) While I am happy to be a sponsor, and get a lot out of it, I'm not one of those A.A.s who goes out actively looking for newcomers to sponsor. If someone thinks I might have something to help him stay sober, he'll ask. One of the interesting things about sponsorship is that while it is mentioned in a number of the stories, the word itself does not appear in the first 164 pages of the "Big Book." We find a lot about the need for "working with others," but not the "S" word. According to *Not God*, Ernest Kurtz's "unofficial" history of A.A., sponsorship grew out of the idea of and need for working with others, and started in the early Cleveland groups: "The core A.A. ideas... were the importance of 'identification' as the main, if not the sole route, to 'getting the program'; the deep sense that 'this simple program' could be 'gotten by anybody,' but that be 'anybodys' concerned were very different in accidental ways, and a profound awareness concerning sobriety that 'you keep it only by giving it away,' and especially impelling conviction of the need for 'working with others.'" Kurtz points out that the pamphlet on sponsorship describes it simply.

*Continued on page 7*

Continued from page 6



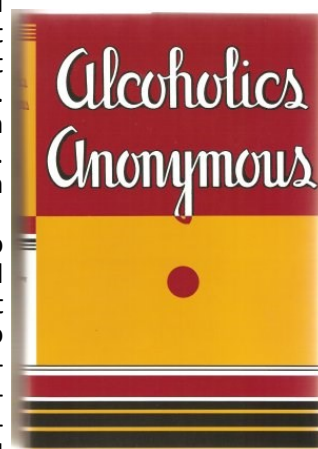
“Essentially the process of sponsorship is this: An alcoholic who has made some progress in the recovery program shares that experience on a continuous, individual basis with another alcoholic who is attempting to attain or maintain sobriety through A.A.” The pamphlet also makes several other important points. “Alcoholics Anonymous began with sponsorship. When Bill W., only a few months sober, was stricken with a powerful urge to drink, this thought came to him: “You need another alcoholic to talk to. You need another alcoholic just as much as he needs you!” He found Dr. Bob, who had been trying desperately and unsuccessfully to stop drinking, and out of their common need A.A. was born. The word “sponsor” was not used then; the Twelve Steps had not been written; but Bill carried the message to Dr. Bob, who in turn safeguarded his own sobriety by sponsoring countless other alcoholics. Through sharing, both of our cofounders discovered, their own sober lives could be enriched beyond measure.” The pamphlet, available at Central Office and at most meetings, also answers several important questions about sponsorship, such as: Is there any one best way of sponsoring a newcomer? “The answer is no. All members are free to approach sponsorship as their own individual experiences and personalities may suggest. Some sponsors adopt a more or less brusque, “Take it or leave it” approach in dealing with newcomers. Others exhibit extreme patience and great personal interest in the people they sponsor. Still others are somewhat casual, content to let the new person take the initiative in asking questions or seeking help in special situations. Each approach is sometimes successful and sometimes fails. The sponsor has to decide which to try in a particular case. The experienced sponsor recognizes the importance of flexibility in working with newcomers, does not rely on a single approach, and may try a number of different approaches with the same person.” The pamphlet also reminds us: “Most present members of Alcoholics Anonymous owe their sobriety to the fact that someone else took a special interest in them and was willing to share a great gift with them.”

Source: *Cyber Sot, Bakersfield, CA*

## Alcoholics Anonymous: How the Book Came To Be

In May 1938, when Bill W. began work on the first draft of what is now the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous... he had been sober about three and a half years. Dr. Bob was sober a few months less than three years, and the other 100 early members who contributed in one way or another to the writing of the book had been sober for periods ranging from a couple of years to a couple of months. The early members realized the book would need a “story” section. “We would have to produce evidence in the form of living proof, written testimonials of our membership itself. It was felt also that the story section could

the distant that the text not.” Dr. members in this effort. the Akron former with two ty, named Bob “went ronites who sobriety rec- nial materi- Jim inter- spects and ries for them. Dr. Bob wrote his own.” By January, the Akron Group had come up with 18 stories. In New York, where there was no one with writing expertise, they decided that each member with substantial sobriety would write his own story. When Bill and a fellow member turned to edit these “amateur attempts,” there were objections. “Who were we, said the writers, to edit their stories? That was a good question, but still we did edit them. The cries of the anguished edited tale-tellers finally subsided and the story section of the book was complete in the latter part of January 1939. So, at last, was the text.” “More than 100 titles were considered, but in the end, it came down to Alcoholics Anonymous or The Way Out, and when the two groups voted, The Way Out received a slight majority. At this point, one of the A.A.s visited the Library of Congress to research the number of books titled The Way Out versus those called Alcoholics Anonymous. There were 12 with the former title, none with the latter, and since nobody wanted to make the book the 13th Way Out, the problem was solved. “That is how we got the title for our book, and that is how our society got its name.” So, this somewhat shaky, often fearful group of men and women somehow brought to publication, on April 10, 1939, the book Alcoholics Anonymous



identify us with reader in a way itself might Bob and the Akron, Ohio, led One member of Group was a newspaperman years of sobriety- Jim. He and Dr. after all the Ak- had substantial ords for testimo- al. In most cases viewed the pro- wrote their sto-



**FINANCES****Feb****YTD****Income**

Literature/Merchandise	4,580	8,615
Group Contributions	830	3,137
AA Birthdays	10	10
Faithful Five	5	30
Anonymous		

**Total Income**

5,425 11,792

**Expenses**

Bank/Credit Card Fees		127
Travel/Licenses/Permits		
Office Supplies		132
Office Improvement		
Payroll Net	1,808	3,236
Payroll Tax		1,341
Postage		
Printing		369
Purchases/Lit./Merch.	3,678	4,972
Insurance		
Rent	500	1,000
Sales Tax		138
Telephone/www	192	381
Utilities	100	200
Contributions		
Computer Software	70	70
Computer Maintenance		74
Computer Equipment		

**Total Expenses**

6,349 12,033

**Net Ordinary Income**

-924 -241

Ttl Other Income

Ttl Other Expenses

**Net Other Income****NET INCOME**

## Thank You to all who contributed to Naples Intergroup/Central Office

**Spirituality and Money**

"While the work of the group treasurer often involves many details, it is important to remember that the money the treasurer oversees serves a spiritual purpose: it enables each group to fulfill its primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is the fundamental work of A.A. and to continue it the group must keep its doors open. The group treasurer is an important part of this Twelfth Step work."

**SELF-SUPPORT:****Where Money and Spirituality Mix****Naples Area Intergroup**

1509 Pine Ridge Rd., Unit B  
Naples, FL 34109  
(50%)

**District 20**

District 20 Treasurer  
P.O. Box 2896  
Naples, FL 34106  
(10%)

**General Service Office**

P. O. Box 459  
New York, N. Y. 10163  
(30%)

**Area 15**

Cary White  
P.O. Box 56  
Sebring FL 33870  
(10%)

**Disbursement of a Group's Funds**

"After the group's basic needs are met, such as providing for rent, literature, refreshments, and insurance, the group can participate in the financial support of the Fellowship as a whole by sending money to various A.A. service entities: 1) their local Intergroup or Central Office, 2) their area and district; and 3) the General Service Office. Many groups provide financial support for their G.S.R.s attending service functions. These entities use contributions in a number of ways, always with the *The A.A. Group Treasurer, F-96,*

*Service material prepared by the  
General Service Office*

\*This is a tentative P & L for January. Our credit card company held January credit card sales due to a "stop payment" action that we instituted. Unknown to us, whenever there is a "dispute", no funds are transferred to the "disputed" account. When the credit card reinstituted payments, they were all credited to the month of February.



## GROUP\*/MEETING CONTRIBUTIONS

The six digit number next to the meeting name is their unique AA Registration Number assigned by the General Service Office in New York. This number signifies they are a "Registered Group"...Those meetings listed without a six digit number are **NOT registered with G.S.O.** and therefore not a "Group" (by AA definition), but is a "meeting".

*\*Please see A.A. pamphlet: "The A.A. Group...where it all begins" P-16*

Group/Meeting	FEB.	YTD
11th Step Prayer & Med., 715482.....	0.....	0
Aprendiendo A Vivre, 176467 .....	0.....	0
Back To Basics.....	0.....	0
Beach Bums 641645 .....	0.....	0
Big Book Comes Alive, 710427 .....	0.....	0
Big Book Steppers, Bonita, 698101 .....	0.....	0
Big Book Steppers, Naples, 654630 .....	0.....	0
Big Book Study, 662395 .....	0.....	0
Bonita Awareness, 124788.....	0.....	0
Bonita Banyan, 176463 .....	0.....	0
Bonita Happy Hour, 670997 .....	0.....	0
Bonita Men, 654428.....	0.....	0
Bonita Saturday Night.....	0.....	0
Bonita Springs Morning, 678493.....	0.....	315
Bonita Springs Women's Group, 169127 .....	244 .....	244
Bonita Step .....	0.....	0
Bonita Unity, 103316.....	0.....	0
Brown Bag, 163924 .....	0.....	280
Burning Desire, 653891 .....	200 .....	200
Cake Meeting .....	0.....	0
Came to Believe, 615490 .....	0.....	0
Candlelight, 606877 .....	0.....	0
Common Solutions, 179613 .....	0.....	73
Early Reflections, 653770 .....	0.....	0
Early Riser, 161795 .....	0.....	187
East Trail, 150873 .....	0.....	0
Easy Does It, 156979.....	0.....	200
Free 2 Be, 6700930.....	0.....	88
Friday Big Book.....	0.....	50
Girlfriends, 678117.....	0.....	0
Golden Gate, 123819.....	0.....	0
Good Orderly Direction, 642330 .....	0.....	0
Gratitude Hour, 134223.....	250 .....	250
Happy Hour, 172923.....	0.....	0
Jaywalkers, 634271 .....	0.....	0
Keep It Positive, 650541 .....	0.....	0
Keep It Simple, 651598 .....	0.....	0
Ladies Night, Bonita, 672950 .....	0.....	0
Lil'White House Group .....	0.....	0
Living Sober, 605904 .....	0.....	0
Living Sober Isle of Capri.....	0.....	0
Men Of Naples, 634030 .....	0.....	0
Morning Reflections, 660700 .....	0.....	0
Naples Group, 103609 .....	0.....	0
Naples Men's, 694322 .....	0.....	0
Naples South, 130210 .....	0.....	100
Naples Young People, 699130 .....	0.....	0
New Dawn, 632504 .....	0.....	0
New Women (Thursday noon) .....	0.....	0
Newcomers Coming Together, 684199.....	0.....	0
No Compromise, 681260 .....	0.....	0
Not A Glum Lot.....	0.....	0
Nueva Vida.....	0.....	0
Old Timers, 698956 .....	0.....	0
One Day At A Time, 120975.....	0.....	0

Group/Meeting	FEB.	YTD
Our Common Welfare .....	26 .....	26
Out To Lunch Bunch, 147323 .....	0.....	0
Pay It Forward, 704772 .....	0.....	0
Primary Purpose Marco, 146715 .....	0.....	0
Saturday Morning Girlfriends.....	0.....	0
Spiritual Solutions, 720796.....	0.....	0
Start Where You Are.....	0.....	0
Step By Step .....	0.....	0
Still Living Sober, 624730.....	0.....	0
Students of the Steps, 635600.....	0.....	0
Sunday Night Speakers, 665079.....	0.....	0
Sunlight Of the Spirit, 647959 .....	0.....	0
Sunset Serenity, 654981.....	0.....	0
Survivor's, 157268.....	50 .....	50
SW 239 BID .....	0.....	0
Swamp Group, 672733.....	0.....	0
Tables of Naples, 147671 .....	0.....	0
Third Tradition,143298.....	60 .....	60
Three Legacies, 679400.....	0.....	0
Thursday Women .....	0.....	200
Unity Noon Step .....	0.....	0
Walk The Steps With Women, 701923.....	0.....	0
Wanderers, Ave Maria .....	0.....	0
We Care, Bonita, 617011 .....	0.....	0
Wednesday Step St. Johns .....	0.....	0
Where Are We.....	0.....	0

AA Groups/Meetings listed here are those which are either registered as a Group at the AA General Service Office in New York, or, have contributed financially to the Naples Area Intergroup.



## Kicked Out Already?

**She was new and beginning to like going to AA, but this meeting said it was "closed"**

My first week in AA I went with a friend to various meetings all over town. If I introduced myself, I just said I was a visitor. Or I said I was accompanying my friend (I did not want to say I was an alcoholic). There was one noon meeting I really liked because it was very artsy and cozy.

However, when I told my friend I wanted to return to it the second week, she said I couldn't because it was a closed meeting and visitors and friends were not allowed. Boy, was I mad. One week in AA and kicked out already!

In one of the meetings that I had attended the first week, I had heard a man share who was very serene and seemed to know the Big Book really well. He had 13 years sober. He had given me his phone number in case I had any questions, or if I felt like drinking.

I called him and reported my complaint about not being allowed to attend my favorite meeting. I also told him I had read through the entire Big Book and could not find any rule about attendance.

He asked me if I recalled hearing the Preamble read at the beginning of each meeting. Of course I did not recall this because I had such difficulty focusing. So he read it to me over the phone. He emphasized the line that said, "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking," which I have learned is our Third Tradition. He asked me, if indeed, I had a desire to stop drinking. I answered with a firm, "Yes." He said I had established my membership and could state that fact in any AA meeting.

Boy, was I thrilled. I wasted no time getting to my favorite meeting, plus many others, and claiming my membership at each one.

This was such a key point in my early sobriety, because I could have just walked off and never come back and never gotten sober.

Thankfully that man gave me his phone number that day and talked to me. That was in 1990, and the desire to stop drinking is still keeping me going, one day at a time.



## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE

### BETWEEN OPEN AND CLOSED A.A. MEETINGS?

#### Closed Meeting

This is a closed meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. In support of A.A.'s singleness of purpose, attendance at closed meetings is limited to persons who have a desire to stop drinking. If you think you have a problem with alcohol you are welcome to attend this meeting. We ask that discussing our problems, we confine ourselves to those problems as they relate to alcoholism.

#### Open Meeting

This is an open meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are glad you are here — especially newcomers. In keeping with our singleness of purpose and our Third Tradition which states "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking," we ask that all who participate confine their discussion to their problems with alcohol.

#### Lead and Discussion Meetings

There are also difference kinds of Meetings. Lead meetings one person tells their story of what life was like while drinking, how they found AA had how applied AA principles has made life better.

In a discussion meeting someone brings up a topic such as how do I not drink at by friend's wedding reception where I'm the best man? How do it toast the couple? How did you work a certain step? Or anything related to alcoholism. Then those attending share their experience, strength and hope on how they solved the problem.

There are also Big Book and 12 & 12 meetings where a chapter of one of those books are read and discussed.

# Celebrate Your Sobriety ... Join the Birthday

## Birthday Plan Members:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sobriety Date</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Home Group</u>
Ron P.	03/29/70	45	Beach Bums
Ron L.	07/24/78	38	Gratitude Hour
Don M.	03/09/80	37	Bonita Unity
Rad W.	08/20/85	31	Gratitude Hour
Jackie F.	04/25/84	32	Free 2 Be
Dennis F.	07/15/84	27	Unity Step
Richard K.	11/25/90	27	Miami
Peter F.	03/01/95	22	Easy Does It
Bill S.	01/11/02	15	Brown Bag
Mary B.	07/22/02	15	Brown Bag
Karen B.	02/11/09	7	Brown Bag
Heather W.	03/22/00	17	Naples Group
Judy W.	03/21/86	31	Easy Does It
Laura T. F.	07/01/16	1	Spiritual Solutions
Steve K.	07/29/92	25	Primary Purpose
Sarah B.		14	
Steve L.	08/28/93	24	Early Reflection

*Welcome Ron L. to the Birthday Plan*

## History of the Birthday Plan...

The 1955 General Service Conference approved the Birthday Plan, under which members of the Fellowship send a dollar a year for each year of sobriety they have in A.A. Others use a figure of \$3.65, a penny a day, for each year. Some give more, but the amount cannot exceed \$3,000 for any year. Special envelopes are available to send your Birthday Plan contribution.



## become a Faithful Fiver

“Every A.A. wants to make sure of his survival from alcoholism, and his spiritual well-being afterward. This is just as it should be. He also wants to do what he can for the survival and well-being of his fellow alcoholics. Therefore he is bound to have a vital interest in the permanence and well-being of A.A. itself.”

Bill W., *Language of the Heart*, p.166

## What are Faithful Fivers?

*Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously contribute \$5.00 or more\* each month to support Naples Inter-group/Central Office.*

\*contributions are limited to \$3,000 per member per year and are tax deductible under Internal Revenue Code 501 (c)(3).

\*Page 9, Self-Support Pamphlet

## FAITHFUL FIVERS

Welcome Mary B.

KAREN B. (04/17), RON L. (07/18), CHUCK W. (03/17),

TOM H., (01/18), BILL S., (01/18), MARY B., (03/18)

THERESA R. MONTHLY, JEFFREY S. MONTHLY,

JUDY W., (01/18), KATHRYN M., MONTHLY

**District 20**

(Collier County, the portion of Monroe County bordered by Collier and Miami-Dade Counties, and the portion of Hendry County below the northernmost boundary of Collier County.)

**District 20 Officers:****Chairman:**

Jerry E., 776-6767  
chair@district20aa.org

**Alt. Chair:**

Mike B., 465-7823  
altchair@district20aa.org

**Treasurer:**

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**Registrar:**

Mary B., 777-8066  
registrar@district20aa.org

**Secretary:**

Michele B., 465-6047  
secretary@district20aa.org

**Service Committees:****Treatment/Accessibilities**

Robert C., 784-8514  
bcrowe616@aol.com  
treatment@district20aa.org  
Business meeting the first  
Thursday of each month at  
7 p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Corrections**

Blake B., 285-7174  
corrections@district20aa.org  
Business meeting the second  
Tuesday of each month at  
5:30 p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Public Information/CPC**

Ronny P., 269-8251  
Business meeting the first  
Wednesday of each month at  
7pm, 24 Hour Club

**Grapevine/Liturature**

Mary B., 777-8066  
Business meeting the third  
Tuesday of each month at  
5:30p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Archives**

Pete C., 784-7725  
pete.curtner@yahoo.com

**Current Practices  
Opportunity****District 20 Website**

Gary G., 877-6747

*The Courier* is published monthly by the *Naples Area Intergroup of Alcoholic Anonymous* with an office located at 1509 Pine Ridge Road, Unit B, Naples, FL 34109-2198. This publication is by, for, and about the Fellowship of AA. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or The *Naples Area Intergroup*. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are reprinted with permission from AA World Service, Inc., and/or The AA Grapevine, Inc..

**District 20  
Business Meeting:**

Last Wednesday of the  
Month 7pm  
Faith Lutheran Church  
4150 Goodlette Road N.,  
Naples, 34103  
**6pm GSR sharing**  
7pm Meeting

**Naples Intergroup/  
Central Office**  
1509 Pine Ridge Rd.  
Unit B  
Naples, FL., 34109  
(next to 24 Hour  
Club)

239-262-6535

**Treatment  
Commitments****DAVID LAWRENCE CENTER**

Every day except  
Wednesday  
7:00 p.m.

John G. 413-777-2065  
jwg1953@gmail.com

**NAPLES COMMUNITY  
HOSPITAL**

Jim P., 572-2075  
jimparadise.sr@gmail.com

**WILLOUGH**

Sunday, Monday and Thursday  
7:30pm  
Ken C., kenknauf@comcast.net  
J.C., 253-3602  
superioryacht07@gmail.com

**HAZELDEN**

Monday, 7:00pm  
Tom H., 777-1430  
tomhigh@me.com

**BRIDGING THE GAP**

Melissa B.  
720-982-1852  
John B.  
537-5862

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*(South Florida, Bahamas, US and British Virgin Islands, Antigua, St. Maarten, and Cayman Islands)*

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**Secretary: Lisa D.**  
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**helps us**  
**stay sober**

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**Office Hours:**

Monday 9am to 4pm  
Tuesday 9am to 4pm  
Wednesday 9am to 4pm  
Thursday 9am to 4pm  
Friday 9am to 4pm  
Saturday 9am to 4pm  
Sunday CLOSED

**Office Volunteers:**

Judy W., Bruce W.,  
Ron M., Peter C  
Ivan B., Diane B.  
Nikki E., Mary D.  
Mary B., Kathleen H.,  
Mary Pat B., Opportunity  
...and loyal Substitutes

**After Hours Phone**

Mary B., 877-8066