

THE COURIER

Naples Area Intergroup
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May, 2018

Safe haven

Keeping the rooms free of sexual predation: Whose responsibility is it?

How safe is your AA meeting? Have you ever personally not felt safe? Have you ever had someone give you a hug and walked away with an uncomfortable feeling? I ask these questions because I view the sexual I've seen in AA meetings. I have seen it happen in all gender relationships, but my personal experience is as a women being preyed upon by men.



I know many of you are thinking, "Well, that's an outside issue," but I disagree. How can it be an outside issue if it affects my safety in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous? Recent history reveals many organizations that have been held in high regard and beyond reproach for many years have recently been scrutinized for turning a blind eye to the behavior of their staff or volunteers toward their vulnerable members. These organizations seemed to have had knowledge of the behaviors and stuck their proverbial "heads in the sand." The victims, along with the media and the courts, have forced these organizations to take a long, hard look at what they had knowledge of and what they did or did not do to try and stop it from occurring.

Now, there are no AA "police," but the membership does take responsibility for its common welfare and carrying the message to those who still suffer. I have heard it said over and over again that the newcomer is the most important person in the room. Do our actions show it?

I came into the rooms 22 years ago with all the humiliation and degradation that happens to a practicing alcoholic women. I needed to feel safe from the life I was leaving behind.

Imagine my surprise when what I found was much of the same barroom behavior I had just left. I was groped, received obscene phone calls, stalked, and was nearly date-raped by a member of the Fellowship. Thank God for a

strong female sponsor who taught me to not tolerate that behavior and to put a firm stop to it. She shared openly with me the facts about those who could not be trusted in the meetings I attended. There were many times I did not feel safe walking into the meeting, except that I knew she would be there and I would not be alone.

What about all of the new women who wander in, do not immediately find a sponsor, and leave in fear? I am deeply saddened when I think about all the female AAs I know personally who have been sexually assaulted by other members. They unfortunately found out the hard way that not all members of AA are trying to live our spiritual way of life. These women remained; how many left?

Calling this behavior "thirteenth stepping" makes it seem benign. This euphemistic terminology makes it sound like a part of the Twelve Steps, when in fact, that couldn't be further from the truth. How can being that self-centered and selfish have anything to do with working the Twelve Steps?

Many may think it a bit harsh to call this behavior "sexual predation." The term "sexual predator" often means a person who habitually seeks out sexual situations. Predation usually refers to one group or person hunting and killing another, or stealing from and destroying another. Is seeking out vulnerable newcomers for sexual gratification not a predatory behavior? Is not taking away a person's chance to feel safe the same as stealing her chance to stay sober?

Does this mean there is not a chair at the table of Alcoholics Anonymous for the sexual predator? Absolutely not; all who wish to recover are welcome. But this does not include taking away someone else's opportunity to stay sober.

Much of this discussion has been changing over the last decade. AA is seeing younger members enter its rooms, and turning a blind eye to what is happening to a minor is very different in the eyes of the law. Like it or not, an individual with knowledge of the behavior could be held criminally liable.

We owe it to our members to make sure the meeting rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous are safe for everyone who enter. That means talking about this topic in our group conscience and with each other. It means leaving barroom behavior behind and treating the newcomers like they truly are the most important people in the room.

-- M.P., Meridian, Idaho
AA. Grapevine, Inc., August, 2009

STEP FIVE: “Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

TRADITION FIVE: “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

TRADITION FIVE: (Long Form) “Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

CONCEPT FIVE: “Throughout our world services structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.”

57th Step Prayer: My inventory has shown me who I am, yet I ask for Your help in admitting my wrongs to another person and to You. Assure me, and be with me, in this Step, for without this Step I cannot progress in my recovery. With Your help, I can do this, and I do it.

TRADITIONS—CHECKLIST

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

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, “I’m not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn’t apply to me”?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow
4. Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
6. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

Step Five:



“Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs”

This is perhaps

difficult, especially discussing our defects with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. There is doubt about that. In actual practice, we usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient. Many of us thought it necessary to go much further. We will be more reconciled to discussing ourselves with another person when we see good reasons why we should do so. The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost items in stock. They only *thought* they had lost their egoism and fear; they only *thought* they had humbled themselves. But they had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else *all* their life story.

A.A. Big Book, p. 72-73

Digging Into the Fifth Step:

It's pretty obvious why we share our inventory with someone else— because we are masters at believing in our own justifications and half-truths. After all, we were the ones who used to say we didn't have a drinking or drug problem. On several occasions, we told ourselves over and over again that we were doing fine as we were slipping deeper and deeper into the dark abyss that is addiction.

This vital exercise begins to provide emotional, mental, and spiritual relief. By sharing wrong with a trusted confidant, guilt and shame start to melt away. Newcomers begin to realize their troubled past isn't as unique as once thought.

Both painful and rewarding, the 5th step is essential to the fundamental change of personality required to over-

come alcohol and drug addiction. In its simplest form, the fifth step is simply a confession of personal wrong-doings. Confession is a long standing practice in the Judeo/Christian tradition, and alcoholics usually store a vast collection of closet skeletons. By sharing the depths of their conscience with another person, alcoholics allow fresh air to enter their soul's closely-guarded closet of shameful skeletons.

Working Step Five — A Gateway to Spiritual Freedom

As we study the steps of Alcoholics Anonymous we realize that we are on a spiritual journey although the word *spirituality* has not been used yet. The “spiritual awakening” that is promised in Step Twelve is the culmination of work performed in the previous steps.

In Step Five we have already come a long way:

1. We have seen that so much of the chaos in our lives has been caused by alcohol.
2. We have come to realize that there is a Power greater than ourselves that is available for healing if we choose to reach out.
3. We made a decision to seek a spiritual solution for our healing.
4. We decided to leave no stone unturned that could prevent us from changing our lives.

And now we've come to Step Five that suggests that we *admit*, in other words speak out loud, the behaviors we wish to change. Alcoholics Anonymous is not only a healing process but also a *cleansing* process; we are made clean.

But doesn't this suggest sin? Are we bad people who need to be cleansed by the spirit?

I don't think so; however, alcoholism is a disease that not only affects the body and mind, it also affects our behavior.

- We are not bad people, but when we were drunk we did some bad things.
- We are not cruel people, but when we were drunk we did and said some cruel things.
- We are not violent people, but when we were drunk we did some violent things.

Alcoholism has been called the Jekyll and Hyde disease. When we are not drinking we are kind, sensitive and creative people, like Dr. Jekyll. However, when we are drinking our personality and behavior is changed; we became crazy like Mr. Hyde.

Continued on page 5

HOW DOES SPONSORSHIP HELP THE NEWCOMER?

It assures the newcomer there is at least one person who understands the situation fully and cares — one person to turn to without embarrassment when questions or problems linked to Sponsorship arise. Sponsorship gives the newcomer an understanding, sympathetic friend when one is needed most. Sponsorship also provides the bridge enabling the new person to meet other alcoholics — in a home group and in and in other groups visited.



HOW SHOULD A SPONSOR BE CHOSEN? The process of matching newcomer and sponsor is as informal as everything in A.A. Often, the new person simply approaches a more experienced member who seems compatible, and asks that member to be a sponsor. Most A.A.'s are happy and grateful to receive such a request. An old A.A. saying suggest, "stick with the winners." It's only reasonable to seek a sharing of experience with a member who seems to be using the A.A. program successfully in everyday life. There are no specific rules, but a good sponsor probably should be a year or more away from the last drink — and should seem to be enjoying sobriety.

SHOULD SPONSOR AND NEWCOMER BE AS MUCH ALIKE AS POSSIBLE?

Often, a newcomer feels most at ease with a sponsor of similar background and interests. However, many A.A.s say they are greatly helped by a sponsor totally unlike themselves. Maybe that's because their attention was then focused on the most important things that any sponsor and newcomer have in common; alcoholism and recovery in

A.A. MAY A NEWCOMER CHANGE SPONSORS? We are always free to select another sponsor with whom we feel more comfortable, particularly if we believe this member will be more helpful to our growth in A.A.

This was taken from the A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature. "Questions & Answers on Sponsorship" pamphlet P-15.

Continued from page 3

This is why in Step Two we say, "that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

I remember years ago being told that there is a difference between being sorry and saying we are sorry. In Step Five we are advised to (admit) what we have done wrong!

Notice also that this step suggests that we exact the nature of our wrongs to a) God and b) another human being. Why not just to God? That would be too, too easy.



There is something necessarily *humbling* in saying what we have done wrong to another human being. The fear, shame and tears will help us never forget what we did in our disease.

- I remember doing my Step Five
- I remember not sleeping the night before.
- I remember the notes I'd written.
- I remember the tears.
- I remember the joyous feeling when it was done.

A combined stone of guilt and shame had been removed from my shoulders. Wow. New life. Resurrection. Transformation. A God moment.

As with all the steps, the energy is created by ourselves in cooperation with God. But we are clearly the ones who are to *admit*.

Also, notice that Alcoholics Anonymous does not offer us an easier, softer way; it uses the word *exact*: The exact nature of our wrongs. Don't explain or minimize or blame others. Say it exactly as it happened. Say it...and move on.

Also, this spiritual program does not tell us to find a priest, minister or rabbi to share our wrongs with; rather *another human being*, somebody who we can trust.

Unlike what some people might suggest, it is not a religious confession. There is no absolution.

Step Five is the gateway to a spiritual freedom.

Father Leo, *Harbor Light Newsletter*, May, 2017

On the 5th Tradition

Says the old proverb, "Shoemaker, stick to thy last." Trite, yes. But very true for us of A.A. How well we need to heed the principle that it is better to do one thing supremely well than many things badly.

Because it has now become plain enough that only a recovered alcoholic can do much for a sick alcoholic, a tremendous responsibility has descended upon us all, an obligation so great that it amounts to a sacred trust. For to our kind, those who suffer alcoholism, recovery is a matter of life or death. So the society of Alcoholics Anonymous cannot, it dare not ever be diverted from its primary purpose.

Temptation to do otherwise will come aplenty. Seeing fine works afoot in the field of alcohol, we shall be sorely tempted to loan out the name and credit of Alcoholics Anonymous to them; as a shall be beset endorse other our present ue, people will assert that new way of new religion, ing the world. it is our bounden duty to show modern society how it ought to live.



movement we to finance and causes. Should success commence to A.A. is a brand life, maybe a capable of saving the world. We shall be told

Oh, how very attractive these projects and ideas can be! How flattering to imagine that we might be chosen to demonstrate that olden mystic promise: "The first shall be last and the last shall be first." Fantastic, you say. Yet some of our well-wishers have begun to say such things.

Fortunately most of us are convinced that these are perilous speculations, alluring ingredients of that new heady wine we are now being offered, each bottle marked "Success"!

Of this subtle vintage may we never drink too deeply. May we never forget that we live by the Grace of God--on borrowed time; that anonymity is better than acclaim; that for us as a movement poverty is better than wealth.

And may we reflect with ever deepening conviction, that we shall never be at our best except when we hew only to the primary spiritual aim of A.A.--*"That of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers alcoholism."*

-- Bill W.

Mom gets busy



When I got sober, I had four young children. I was just so tired, tired of trying to drink like I needed to and still be a "good" mom. Life was drudgery. Those kids were work that interfered with my partying (which consisted of drinking in front of the TV). I knew I could not continue to live the way I'd been living. Death actually seemed the easier option.

These feelings of failure and hopelessness culminated with my 12-year-old walking in on me as I was trying to slit my wrists. That day I had my last drink. It was over 14 years ago, and I am relieved to say I've never gotten that low again.

My first sponsor was excited about sobriety and seemed to know everyone. She was my introduction to fun in AA. Along with doing Step work, she took charge and brought her sponsees everywhere. She and I and another of her sponsees each had four young children. When we showed up at our babysitting AA meeting, we filled the daycare.

We brought our kids to sober Christmas parties where they got presents from Santa and we all ate and danced. We went to sober Pow Wows and to campgrounds, where our kids played with other AAs' children. Sometimes we left the kids at home and got carloads of AA people to sobriety conventions. Sleeping six to a room, we would talk and giggle into the wee hours of the morning. All of my children's birthday parties were sober events with my AA friends and their kids. We were all learning to be a happy family.

When I was two years sober, that same sponsor told me I was ready to be a GSR. Boy, I was afraid. I was sure that I wasn't smart enough to do the business of AA. I had been a GSR for only two months when I attended my first area assembly. I had so many questions that my DCM told me to just go to the microphone and ask. No way! I was too scared. So I learned to listen and eventually my questions were answered.

It was hard not knowing how it all worked, but hanging out with other GSRs and area servants was a hoot. We ate candy, drank lots of coffee and whispered amongst ourselves in a less than spiritual way. I loved it, I have been involved with general service ever since. I've grown as a person and count my general service colleagues among the most spiritual AA members that I have met. Love and tolerance is truly our code here. Working with and supporting people I do not always agree with has proven to be a huge catalyst of growth for me. Hanging out with them I laugh and cry with joy. And my fear of the microphone has mostly disappeared. I find it's the place where the spiritual rubber hits the road. Carrying the AA message on a larger scale is a great feeling. It's so far from the feeling I had 14 years ago when my daughter saw me trying to kill myself. I insist on having fun in sobriety today and AA has shown me.

Karla L., Lake Forest Park, Washington

AA Grapevine, May 2018

ANNOUNCING A NEW BOOK FROM GRAPEVINE!



AA IN THE MILITARY

Stories of experience, strength
and hope from Grapevine

Just published!

AA in the Military

Stories of experience, strength
and hope from Grapevine

AA in the Military is a collection of stories, previously published in Grapevine, by members of Alcoholics Anonymous who have served in the military.

The book begins with letters from the troops during World War II, when Grapevine first became a vital tool in keeping soldiers sober and connected to AA.

The chapters that follow are filled with stories of experience, strength and hope—by both men and women—who served their country on land, sea and air. These personal accounts illustrate the challenges alcoholics in uniform encounter, often under difficult circumstances, far from loved ones.

The book concludes with a powerful selection of stories by our sober veteran members, titled "Coming Home."

My Past is My Greatest Asset in Helping Others

Jake, alcoholic, selfish; judgmental; perfectionist; ass.

Left to my own devices I am, "unable...to bring into [my] consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago" (BB p.24).

I forget how get that I drank bottom shelf point of passing out.

This is the *exact* need to talk to I need to hear lems. Problems pathize with

I'm so far separated from my last drink. Without the newcomer, I think I'm different. I think I'm better. I think only about me. I focus on personal-ities before principles. I look for differences instead of similarities. I am terminally unique: "Selfishness, self-centeredness, that [I] think is the root of [my] troubles" (BB p. 62).

When I take selfless actions like talking to the newcomer, taking them to and from meetings, and making them feel welcome in my home group, I feel better. I don't know why it works. But it's not called *Why It Works* it's called *How It Works*.

Giving it away to keep it seems paradoxical. The concept is perhaps best summarized in this simile, "like a gaunt prospector...[my] pick struck gold...a limitless lode which will pay dividends only if [I mine] it for the rest of [my] life and insist on giving away [my] entire product" (BB p.128-129).

Every time I talk to the newcomer I feel an immediate sense of purpose and ease wash over me. A feeling of gratitude. A realization of where I came from to where I am now. A minimization of selfishness and self-centeredness. A deflation of my ego and separateness.

When I talk to the newcomer it's about my experience, strength, and hope with the program. I usually find that my past is my greatest asset. The most successful message I can share is: I have been in a similar position before. This is what I did. These were the results.

I am also careful not to spoil a future opportunity. There are a lot of people coming into the rooms who are unsure. They are on a court card, or in program that necessitates going to meetings. First and foremost, I ask: What happened?

If they are wary I tell them that people don't usually wind up in AA by mistake. Something must have been the catalyst for them to attend a meeting. I suggest that since they are here, they owe it to themselves to answer the question, "Am I an alcoholic?"

I stress that they alone can answer this question. However, it



bad it was. I for-a-bottle-a-day of vodka to the out or black-ing

reason why I the newcomer. about their prob-that I can't em-anymore because

may be helpful to get a sponsor and go through the Book. A sponsor can help them come to a determination. If they do not have a sponsor – I give them my number and ask them to call me tomorrow. If they are unwilling to take that action, then they likely are not ready to swallow hard truths about their condition.

Occasionally, I run into someone who is ready to act. The stars have aligned, they are entirely willing, and these prospects are extremely satisfying to work with. They are worth their weight in gold.

There is another class who I must not forget about. Those who are no longer considered newcomers, but suffer in the rooms. Personally, I have an extremely high pain threshold.

I have in the past, let resentments and character defects stew and fester to the point of extreme discomfort. I have gone through periods in my sobriety where I started resting on my laurels. Pain is a great motivator, but I don't have to bleed out because of these wounds. I can ask others to help me dress them. I also don't shoot the wounded. We are all human.

I must not only focus on the newcomers, but also anyone who needs help – time or no time. I do my best to go around the room and shake as many hands as I can before the meeting starts. I try to call as many fellows as possible to talk to three alcoholics a day.

A few months ago, I called a friend and he told me that he felt like drinking. He thought AA was "the bible for dum-mies" and he was on the fence. I used the adage that I have felt like he felt: like AA wasn't working for me.

This is what I did: I realized that there was more that I could do. That the price of sobriety has gone up the longer I have stayed sober, and that I took the actions of getting a new sponsor, finding a new group with more structure and doubling down on AA.

The result was: I felt better. I also reached out to some of his other friends from an older group that I used to go to. I told them to give him a call and ask him how he was doing. He cooled off and is still sober.

There are no second-class AA's. I am responsible when *anyone, anywhere* reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA to *always* be there and for that I am responsible. Practicing the Fifth Tradition can be summarized simply:

1. It reminds me where I came from.
2. It gets me out of my head and relieves me of selfish-ness.
3. It deflates my ego and makes me feel like I'm a small part of a great whole.
4. It shows those who are not yet convinced that AA will be here when they are ready.
5. It shows those who are ready how they can recover.
6. It helps us keep people on the fringes from getting picked off.

I don't know why, but it always makes me feel better to shake someone's hand and ask how they are doing.

Jake R., *Harbor Light Newsletter*, May, 2017

FINANCES**Apr*****YTD****Income**

Literature/Merchandise	4,731	18,588
Group Contributions	4,406	8,087
AA Birthdays	380	390
Faithful Five	10	60
Anonymous		

Total Income

9,527 27,125

Expenses

Bank/Credit Card Fees	89	286
Travel/Licenses/Permits		
Office Supplies	106	296
Office Improvement		
Payroll Net	1,617	6,471
Payroll Tax	1,113	2,455
Postage	12	12
Printing	1,280	2,018
Purchases/Lit./Merch.	3,342	10,213
Insurance		
Rent	500	2,000
Sales Tax	51	661
Telephone/www		573
Utilities	100	400
Contributions		
Computer Software		64
Computer Maintenance		74
Computer Equipment		

Total Expenses

8,211 25,535

Net Ordinary Income

1,316 1,590

***PRELIMINARY**

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	APR	YTD
11th Step Prayer & Med., 715482.....	0.....	94
Aprendiendo A Vivre, 176467.....	0.....	0
Back To Basics.....	0.....	0
Beach Bums 641645.....	0.....	0
Big Book Comes Alive, 710427.....	20.....	20
Big Book Steppers, Bonita, 698101.....	0.....	0
Big Book Steppers, Naples, 654630.....	0.....	70
Big Book Study, 662395.....	0.....	0
Bonita Awareness, 124788.....	0.....	0
Bonita Banyan, 176463.....	0.....	0
Bonita Happy Hour, 670997.....	539.....	539
Bonita Men, 654428.....	0.....	0
Bonita Saturday Night.....	0.....	0
Bonita Springs Morning, 678493.....	442.....	759
Bonita Springs Women's Group, 169127.....	339.....	583
Bonita Step.....	0.....	0
Bonita Unity, 103316.....	0.....	0
Brown Bag, 163924.....	0.....	280
Burning Desire, 653891.....	0.....	200
Cake Meeting.....	0.....	0
Came to Believe, 615490.....	0.....	0
Candlelight, 606877.....	0.....	0
Common Solutions, 179613.....	345.....	418
Early Reflections, 653770.....	0.....	0
Early Riser, 161795.....	503.....	690
East Trail, 150873.....	0.....	0
Easy Does It, 156979.....	0.....	450
Free 2 Be, 6700930.....	93.....	181
Friday Big Book.....	0.....	50
Girlfriends, 678117.....	50.....	50
Golden Gate, 123819.....	0.....	0
Good Orderly Direction, 642330.....	0.....	0
Gratitude Hour, 134223.....	0.....	250
Happy Hour, 172923.....	0.....	0
Jaywalkers, 634271.....	0.....	0
Keep It Positive, 650541.....	0.....	0
Keep It Simple, 651598.....	194.....	194
Ladies Night, Bonita, 672950.....	75.....	75
Lil'White House Group.....	0.....	0
Living Sober, 605904.....	20.....	20
Living Sober Isle of Capri.....	0.....	0
Men Of Naples, 634030.....	200.....	200
Morning Reflections, 660700.....	600.....	600
Naples Group, 103609.....	250.....	250
Naples Men's, 694322.....	75.....	75
Naples South, 130210.....	96.....	196
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.....	80
Nueva Vida.....	0.....	0
Old Timers, 698956.....	0.....	0
One Day At A Time, 120975.....	0.....	0

Group/Meeting	APR	YTD
Our Common Welfare.....	52.....	78
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.....	100.....	100
Sunset Serenity, 654981.....	0.....	0
Survivor's, 157268.....	0.....	50
SW 239 BID.....	0.....	0
Swamp Group, 672733.....	0.....	0
Tables of Naples, 147671.....	95.....	95
Third Tradition, 143298.....	0.....	60
Three Legacies, 679400.....	25.....	75
Thursday Women.....	0.....	200
Unity Noon Step.....	63.....	63
Walk The Steps With Women, 701923.....	0.....	0
Wanderers, Ave Maria.....	0.....	0
We Care, Bonita, 617011.....	230.....	230
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.



Activities of the General Service Board A.A. World Services, Inc.

Quarterly Report from G.S.O. *This is a confidential bulletin, for use only within A.A. January 2018*

Some Highlights:

G.S.O. Financial Results: Bob Slotterback (nonalcoholic) reviewed the financial results of G.S.O. for the twelve months ended December 31, 2017. Gross Sales for 2017 of \$13,898,550 were \$148,550 (1.1%) more than budgeted and \$484,621 (3.6%) greater than 2016. Net Sales of \$13,693,372 were \$178,372 (1.3%) more than budgeted and \$504,114 (3.8%) greater than 2016. Gross Profit from literature was \$9,361,613 and represented a 68.4% Gross Profit Percentage, compared with 67.8% for the year 2016. The budgeted Gross Profit percentage was 65.2%. Contributions for 2017 of \$8,409,452 were the highest ever. This was \$734,452 (9.6%) greater than budgeted and \$474,583 (6.0%) greater than 2016. This reflected increased participation by both groups and individuals. The online contributions system was a factor in the increased participation. A sincere thank you was expressed to the Fellowship for their continuing support. Total Revenue (gross profit from literature plus contributions) was \$17,771,383, or \$1,285,433 (7.8%) greater than budgeted and \$890,943 (5.2%) greater than 2016. Total expenses for the period of \$16,012,547 were \$75,605 (.5%) less than budgeted but \$596,731 (3.9%) greater than 2016. The increase in expenses was due to increased number of staff from open positions being filled, along with increased costs of professional fees, IT systems, communications inventory study, and financial controls improvements, such as legal reviews of our numerous contracts. Net profit for the year 2017 was \$1,758,837, \$1,361,039 more than budgeted and \$294,212 more than 2016. Given the profits, G.S.O. may be able to transfer excess funds to the Reserve Fund in early 2018, subject to completion of the audit.

G.S.O. 2018 Budget Presentation: The 2018 G.S.O. budget projects net sales of \$13,780,000, which is \$86,628 greater than 2017 actual. After subtracting manufacturing costs and shipping expenses, gross profit is budgeted at \$9,260,245, or 67.2% gross profit percentage. Contributions are budgeted at \$8,200,000, which is \$525,000 (6.8%) more than the 2017 budget, but \$209,452 less than the 2017 actual.

Reserve Fund As of December 31, 2017: the Reserve Fund had a balance of \$14,352,618. The Reserve Fund represents approximately 9.5 months of operating expenses. Upon the completion of the audits of A.A.W.S. and Grapevine, a determination will be made as to the transfer of excess profits from 2017 to the Reserve Fund.

“One of the challenges identified in that report is a lack of growth in the Fellowship in recent years, giving rise to an opportunity to do a better job of reaching out the hand of A.A. It identified a number of processes that might be undertaken by the G.S.B, A.A.W.S., AA Grapevine, G.S.O. Staff and the Fellowship at large to improve our efforts in this area. A key process goal is improving and expanding effective communications within our structures and beyond. As trusted servants we are duty bound to make sure the best possible communication and unity exist among A.A.W.S., AA Grapevine, the G.S.B. and the General Service Office. The Fellowship deserves nothing less than the best.”

Recommendations: It was recommended and approved that: • The 2018 G.S.O. budget, which reflects net sales of \$13,780,000 and a bottom line profit of \$501,693, be adopted. • The 2018 Grapevine budget reflecting a net loss of \$271,313 be adopted. • A transfer of \$114,000 from the Reserve Fund for the Grapevine's website upgrade be made. • A transfer from the Reserve Fund of \$28,000 for the La Viña archival project be made.

Editor note: The full Quarterly Report is available at the Central office or on line at: www.aa.org You can arrange for reports be sent directly to your email address at this site.

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	38	Bonita Unity
Rad W.	08/20/85	31	Gratitude Hour
Jackie F.	04/25/84	33	Free 2 Be
Dennis F.	07/15/84	27	Unity Step
Richard K.	11/25/90	27	Miami
Peter F.	03/01/95	23	Easy Does It
Bill S.	01/11/02	16	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	25	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:

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chair@district20aa.org

Alt. Chair:

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Treasurer:

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Registrar:

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

Secretary:

Tiffany M., 227-8669
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Service Committees:**Treatment/Accessibilities**

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Business meeting the first
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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/Literature

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

Archives

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pete.curtner@yahoo.com

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

Peggy P.E., 269-7651

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

**MONTHLY
INTERGROUP
MEETING**

Central Office
1509 Pine Ridge Rd.
Unit B
(next to 24 Hour Club)

First Wednesday of
month at 7:00pm

**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
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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

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SERVICE
helps us
stay sober