

# THE COURIER

Naples Area Intergroup  
1509-2 Pine Ridge Road  
Naples, Florida 34109



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August, 2020

## *"Our 12 Step Responsibility—Are We Going to Any Length?"*

August is the Eighth Step and Eighth Tradition month. Tradition 8 is significant because it refers to "Special Workers". Who are they, where do they come from, and why do we need them? Special Workers are employed at our General Service Office in New York. They are all AA members just like us. While they live and work in New York City, they hail from all over the US and Canada. While these paid "special workers" serve the fellowship in many ways, they usually rotate with a new assignment at GSO every 2 years.

Intergroup/Central Office's "special worker" as Office Manager. Like the Manager is not paid to do 12th Step work. When Tradition 8 states "forever long time. We all go to our Home work. Much of what we do as "paid special workers" is to provide information about opportunities that are available to carry the AA message. We do it at the local level. Our friends at GSO do it at the national and international level.



workers" usually are Office Managers. employs one part-time paid "special "special workers" at GSO, the Office Work, he is paid to facilitate 12th Step nonprofessional", "forever" means a Group and elsewhere to do 12th Step

How is all this paid for? Like GSO, Intergroup depends on AA Group contributions, AA member personal contributions, and the sale of literature. We cannot accept gifts from outside the fellowship. Even individual AA members are limited to the dollar amount they can contribute in a given year, currently \$5,000.

Next month is Tradition 9 which is about creating service boards or committees directly responsible for those they serve. Special Workers report to these service boards and committees. The Naples Intergroup Office Manager is responsible to the fellowship through its elected members on the Naples Intergroup Steering Committee. This Steering Committee is responsible to the Fellowship on all AA business.

## **WANTED**

Volunteers for **AA Central Office** (Desk Workers, inventory, www updating, 12th Step calls/visits/rides, clerical help, Courier Newsletter, updating Meeting List, etc., etc.

Please stop in to introduce yourself. Office open Monday thru Saturday 9am to 4pm

(Office is just west of 24 Hour Club (1509-2 Pine Ridge Road)

**STEP EIGHT:** “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”

**TRADITION EIGHT:** “Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.”

**CONCEPT EIGHT:** “The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) ...for policy and finance, they are the principle planners and administrators. ... (b)...incorporated and constantly active service, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial; oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.”

***8th Step Prayer:***

Higher Power,

I ask Your help in making my list of all those I have harmed. I will take responsibility for my mistakes and Be forgiving to others as You are forgiving to me. Grant me the willingness to begin my restitution. This I pray.

## TRADITIONS—CHECKLIST

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

1. Is my own behavior accurately described by the Traditions? If not, what needs changing?
2. When I chafe about any particular Tradition, do I realize how it affects others?
3. Do I sometimes try to get some reward - even if not money - for my personal AA efforts?
4. Do I try to sound in AA like an expert on alcoholism? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On AA itself?. On psychology? On spiritual matters? Or, heaven help me, even on humility?
5. Do I make an effort to understand what AA employees do? What workers in other alcoholism agencies do? Can I distinguish clearly among them?
6. In my own AA life, have I any experiences which illustrate the wisdom of this Tradition?
7. Have I paid enough attention to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions? To the pamphlet AA Tradition -- How It Developed?

c. THE AA GRAPEVINE INC., PO BOX 1980, GRAND CENTRAL STATION, NEW YORK, NY 10163-1980



In mental preparation of my Eighth Step list, I discovered that some names came to mind naturally. In most instances, we want to change for the better where our children and family are concerned.

However, I found there were other people I did not want to make amends to, people I held some resentments toward--so I impulsively concluded they didn't deserve any amends. I have to keep in mind that had I behaved in a more reasonable manner, they might not have responded as they did. If the circumstances had been reversed, I might have taken the same action they chose. I have to allow others to make mistakes and be human. Harboring resentments because of something others did is, in effect, imposing my values upon them. By imposing my standards upon them, I am trying to assume God's role. I must realize I am not responsible for the actions of others, whether I approve of them or not. If I take on that task, I am passing judgment on them for reacting in a way that was unacceptable to me. I am taking their inventory.

In this Step, it states that we "became willing to make amends." This implies that there is going to be some conscious effort on my part to make all the needed amends. Those that come easy, to my old way of reasoning, would be an excellent stopping point. Yet the Step says we became willing to make amends to all those we had harmed. In going to these other people, I don't need to crawl or go on and on about how sorry I am, because this would make me appear worthless. I don't believe I need apologize for being human; rather, I simply need to acknowledge that I was at fault and humbly ask them to pardon me. I do not need to make amends on my hands and knees; I need to walk tall, without false pride. When I go in humility and sincerely ask people to forgive me, this will remove the burden from my shoulders. They, too, may have been at fault, but I am neither their God nor their conscience. I am responsible only for myself.

For me, this Step offers two features: I am being responsible, by owning up to my wrongs and making amends for them; at the same time, I accept others as they are, regardless of what they did, or of what they may do when I go to them to make amends.

It's a Step with a double feature. When doing it, we make a double play. After finishing it, we receive double indemnity. Our reward is two for the price of one.

B.D., Reynoldsburg, OH

With permission, The AA Grapevine,

August, 2007

$$B = \frac{7.140}{\pi(0,11)^2} \cdot 0,9069 = 170.342$$

We often talk about one of the great AA paradoxes: giving it away in order that we may keep it. We receive the gift of sobriety freely, and we give it freely. Our message is so precious and life-giving that a price cannot be put on it. It is destined to remain free.

It has been said that nothing is more important for personal recovery in the AA program than working with others. When we share our own experience with others, AA becomes a labor of love, to be enjoyed as a commodity of great wealth. But only if we give it away.

Yet we find that some AA members work at outside agencies that deal with the alcohol problem. They are called "two-hatters" since they wear one hat at work and another at AA functions. Are they to be considered hypocritical? Are they violating our Tradition of non professionalism? Years of experience tells us no, that members who elect to work full-time in the field of alcoholism do not professionalize AA's Twelfth Step.

I know of a very dedicated member of AA who became employed in the field of alcoholism by a government agency. Never was it heard of him that he broke his anonymity, nor did he wear the hat of his job to any of the meetings. He kept the two separate; in fact, he even became a delegate. After all, who is best suited for this employment: the lay person who has learned of the alcohol problem from a book or classroom, or an alcoholic who has lived the problem?

Heard at a Meeting:

Action without prayer is self-reliance.

Prayer without action is begging.



IN approaching Step Eight for the first time, those of us who tend to fight or question various of the Steps until we become convinced they are vital to our sobriety, need reassuring on several points. We may be tempted to tell ourselves that we have done enough housecleaning in the Fourth and Fifth Steps. If we are truthful though, we will have to admit that the biggest obstacle to our taking this Step is that we are *afraid* to face the unpleasant aspects of our past, especially where we

have been at fault.

The first part of the Eighth Step is neither difficult to understand nor hard to go through with. As a matter of fact, if we have written out our Fourth Step inventory, we may already have the list of persons we have harmed. However, becoming willing to make amends to them all is another matter. To make amends means to mend or repair, in this case damaged relationships with people, organizations and institutions we have wronged.

This Eighth Step is to our relations with others what the Fourth was to our relations with ourselves. And obviously the Ninth and Fifth Steps are similarly related to one another. When I went through with the Fourth Step inventory for the first time, it was with the understanding that I would move on to the Fifth Step as soon as possible. Clearly, I do well to approach this "became willing" part of the Eighth Step with the idea that it feeds directly into the action in Step Nine of going out and making such amends as I can.

Here honesty becomes all important. The quickest way for me to put myself in bad relationship with the Step is to kid myself that I am willing to make an amend if I am not really completely ready. The best method I know of for dealing with unwillingness is this: 1) face it honestly, 2) remember that I have agreed to "go to any lengths to gain victory over alcohol" and 3) ask God to make me willing. This approach works--maybe not in five minutes--but if persisted in, it does work.

Then the question arises of just what constitutes an amend. Many of us find that the old rationalization, "If I stay sober, that's amends enough to those I have hurt," just doesn't work. We have to be willing to go further. Some of the most common amends have to do with: people we owe money; wives, parents, children, relatives and friends we have mistreated; employers, employees and business associates we have harmed; people with whom we have become involved morally in an injurious manner.

This list is only a partial one, but it gives a pretty good general idea of the different types of messes we are dealing with. It is impossible to lay down general rules for handling these various situations. For me, there is no substitute for sitting down with my sponsor and thrashing out each individual case, keeping in mind the intention to do whatever turns out to be necessary to thoroughly and honestly go through with the Step.

In the case of money amends, I didn't have enough money to make them all good at once, but a willingness to pay when and as I could, backed up by small monthly installments, did wonders in putting matters right. In the case of family members I had wronged, a sincere apology was often amend enough, although I sometimes found it difficult to become willing to go even this far.

My natural inclination with unpleasant life situations or soured personal relationships is to sweep them under the rug, look the other way, justify myself and hope they will resolve themselves in time. It seems to be a plausible enough approach but, unfortunately, it never worked very well. These wrongs refused to stay forgotten, didn't solve themselves, and even thrived on this treatment to the extent that they drove me back to the first drink again and again.

Facing the people I had hurt and the difficulties I had created seemed impossible, but those who had gone before me on the road to recovery in AA assured me that not only was this method possible but, if followed through, it produced freedom from the guilt, fear, self-pity, resentment and depression which these situations had produced in my life.

I gained faith in the principle which the Eighth Step is about, through experience. When I went through with the process, it did produce the results my sponsor and AA friends said it would.

I'm a guy who used to make god out of what others thought of me. This Step helped free me from a slavish dependence on other people's opinions. It helped teach me the value of placing principles before personalities in my life. It is not a Step that I feel *I have taken*. What I have made is a beginning. As it says in Chapter Five of the Big Book, "We are not saints." I still have character defects, and I still hurt other people (though not as often or seriously as before AA). Each time I become aware of an amend I owe, there is another chance to become willing with God's help to put the principles of the AA program before my fear of personalities (mine or anyone else's).

The wonderful thing about growth on the program is that each time I make a right decision in the area of becoming willing to make an amend it makes the next one a little easier to make. And strangely, I find that the more willing I become to admit it when I *am* wrong, the less often am I in the position of having to make such an admission. Sure I am still wrong, but only sometimes now--not all the time as I used to be.

T.P., Hankins, New York  
With Permission, AA Grapevine, January, 1967



## Virtual 2020 International Convention July 2020 @aa.org

Throughout the month of July, the 2020 International Convention will come alive online to provide a new experience that includes A.A. speakers; a digital “Carrying the Message Pavilion”; sharing from nonalcoholic friends of A.A. our history; a presentation of the 40 millionth Big Book; a new Archives video on the history of A.A.; an AA Grapevine video created for the Convention, and more.

We will be up and running on aa.org by July 1, 2020, to coincide as closely as possible with the original Convention date, and the site will be available throughout the entire month of July.

## GRAPEVINE AND LA VIÑA ARE HERE TO HELP

Due to the current changing health situation, many AA meetings across the U.S. and Canada are finding it safer to close. To help members during this time, we are giving everyone free access for a limited period to our 2020 Grapevine (Jan. through May) and La Viña (Jan/Feb through May/Jun.) print issues.

Please share with your fellows.

<https://www.aagrapevine.org/we-are-here-to-help>

## Hitting Meetings

There’s always something good that comes out of a seemingly bad situation. At least, that’s been my experience, as long as I’m looking for the assets. Despite the shutdown or limitation of group gatherings, the advent of Zoom as a viable and easy meeting vehicle has been an absolute Godsend. Think about it; if this stuff had happened five or seven years ago, we might have been out of luck when it came to hitting any kind of meeting where we can see each other. I know that sometimes it feels like a real loss to not be able to go to meetings, seeing friends, checking in with sponsor or sponsee(s), meeting newcomers, and the like, but I have had really good experiences with Zoom meetings. I’ve logged in to large speaker meetings, where the message has thoroughly been carried. And, I’ve been able to see and hear people’s stories that I would not have otherwise ever had contact with, albeit virtual. Holiday face-to-face marathons have evolved (by necessity) into virtual marathon. I was recently invited to host a time slot during the course of a time-tested July 4th marathon, meeting an amazing group of ladies totally devoted to prayer and meditation—what an amazing blessing. I was in a Zoom meeting that morphed into to the memory of a stand-up sober man, Ernie B., and I swear the love people felt for Ernie (and each other) was palpable, despite it being online—a wonderful tribute to love and unity. I even worked with another alcoholic (who had relapsed despite long-term sobriety), and got him through his fifth step, which we did through Zoom. I never actually met the man face-to-face. But we certainly practiced and applied principles, and did it well. The Big Book states that the miracle of recovery is readily available to one and all, “so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition” (p. 85). Moreover, staying spiritually fit involves practicing the legacy of unity, by attending meetings: “. . . every A.A. meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to Him” (12&12, p. 33). I have to go, and want to go to meetings, so I can see first-hand all the good that happens to fellow A.A.’s successfully practicing spiritual principles, One Day At A Time. No one could have foreseen whether or not the meeting had to be face-to-face or virtual; principles are not bound by time or delivery methodology. All I need is true humility and an open mind, which can (and will) lead me to continued faith in the fact that this world is a good place, filled with good people (see 12&12, p. 33).

Greg S., *Conscious Contact*, Prescott, AZ



## SOBRIETY IS THE PAYOFF

Did I read that right? "Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional"? How on earth could any outfit as big as AA operate on a basis other than professional? How could its members get anything done? How could they hold themselves together? How could they stay in business? All very mysterious.

To compound the mystery, the Tradition goes on to say that AA "service centers may employ special workers." But if AA is not run professionally, what level of competence can be expected of the staffs working at those centers?

Long before I started asking those perhaps typical questions, I was asking other, more pressing questions. As in so many areas of my recovery, I only half understood things, and one piece of misinformation I had was that AA members did not receive pay for any form of service within an AA framework. With that in mind, I was baffled and resentful when I learned that AA members who made coffee in some of the local groups were being paid. Since I was involved in a coffee detail, too, how come they were getting money and I was not?

Another sore point concerned an AA member who worked for pay at a local clubhouse. I was quite put out, for it seemed to me that he was being paid to stay sober. What about me? I was staying sober, too. Why wasn't I getting paid?

When I had stewed long enough, I asked an older, wiser AA member. He pointed out that making coffee at some of the larger groups was so time-consuming that the groups were better served by paying coffee makers. They might be AA members, yes, but they were not being paid to stay sober; they were paid to make coffee. As for the custodian at the clubhouse, he was not paid to stay sober; he was paid to keep the club running smoothly.

Later on, I began to ask how volunteers could possibly take care of the wide variety of jobs essential to the operation of service centers around the world, including our own GSO (the AA General Service Office of the United States and Canada). For instance, the correspondence alone—how could they handle it all? I learned that, because of the sheer volume of work, both local and worldwide, there had to be salaried jobs. And who was better qualified to fill those jobs than our own fellow AAs? Thanks to this Tradition, the line was clearly drawn between Twelfth Step work, which is never done for pay, and professional or salaried work. The Tradition plainly shows us that our service center employees are not being paid to stay sober; they are paid for their special skills.

Another thing that used to confuse me was the matter of AAs who are employed in the field of alcoholism. I was made acutely aware of the confusion when a newcomer I was sponsoring asked me how much money "AA counselors" were paid when they spoke at AA meetings. There are no "AA counselors." But AA members can create such an image if they forget themselves and, on an AA group podium, speak in their professional capacities as workers in the alcoholism field.

The question of whether it was proper for AA members to enter that field as paid workers was one that kept our early membership in a state of unrest. The outcry was that AA knowledge was being sold and the perpetrators would surely succumb to the temptation to use the AA name for further financial gain. The quite genuine consternation was not over money-making itself. What worried AAs was the real possibility that commercializing (professionalizing) this spiritual recovery program would ruin it, and all those recovering in AA would once more be consigned to death.

Only with time and experience did we come to see that our fears were unfounded. Alcoholism counselors who were also AA members showed that they could quite effectively carry the AA message of recovery and hope without receiving pay for Twelfth Step work.

Carrying the message is at the heart of our recovery program, and one very attractive way of doing it is via the telephones at central offices and answering services. I used to think that the people who worked the phones were considered part-time staff and paid accordingly. Since I was always in need of extra money, I signed up at our local intergroup, only to learn that AA members do that work on a strictly volunteer basis. Like any other form of Twelfth Step work, it is done to help assure another day of sobriety for ourselves.

There was no pay, but I was afforded one of my first glimpses of the wisdom of Tradition Eight. I realized that I didn't have to feel resentment in case I was getting paid less than the woman at the phone behind me. Nor did I have to compete with the guy across from me in order to get more than he might be getting. None of us was being paid anything in cash—only in sobriety.

Further Eight Tradition wisdom came to me slowly, a glimpse at a time, as more of my questions were answered. What about AA members who speak at AA meetings or bring meetings into institution—do they get paid? What about AA speakers at Regional Forums or workshops or conventions—do they get paid? How about AA speakers who fill commitments at non-AA meetings, such as high schools, parent-teacher groups, or classes of premed college students—how much do those speakers get?

I remember sitting in a coffee shop shortly after coming into AA, in 1960. I was with some affluent-looking men who were talking about "getting on the speakers' circuit" and acquiring "some of that good money." I did not understand that they were talking about their business lives, and I assumed that there was money to be made by becoming an AA speaker. That was for me! But I had another surprise in store when I started speaking at local AA groups and at AA meetings in institutions. No money!

There was still no money when I began to speak as an AA member before non-AA groups. The Public Information Committee of our local intergroup impressed on me the importance of maintaining our amateur standing. Many non-AAs find it difficult to believe that we would visit their classrooms or agencies as volunteers, on a nonprofessional basis. I can't say that I blame them for their skepticism. I would not have believed it once myself.

It seems to me that there is more to professionalism than just the question of pay. There is such a thing as a professional's attitude, whatever the profession may be. It is an attitude that takes pride in a job well done. With me, however, the attitude sometimes strays out of the working area and tells me that I am entitled to rewards of prestige and recognition for being sober and for doing Twelfth Step work. And that is when I am in error with AA and in trouble with myself. When I look for special treatment because of my service activities, I am acting contrary to the spirit of the Traditions.

The Eighth Tradition reminds me that my AA membership does not automatically make me all-knowledgeable in the field of alcoholism. The Tradition encourages me to keep in touch with my local AA service centers and to learn as much as I can about them. It is an equally good idea, in my opinion, to ask about nearby rehab programs for alcoholics. AA's choice of non professionalism as its way of life does not mean that we cannot cooperate with programs that are conducted by professionals.

Finally, a really curious sidelight was thrown on the subject once by a drinking drunk I was twelfth-stepping. He would not, or could not, get honest with himself and tried to laugh off his powerlessness by clever remarks. "You're an alcoholic," he said once, "but me—I am a professional drunk."

What price professionalism?

W.H., New York

With Permission, AA Grapevine, October, 2008



## Editorial: On the 8th Step . .

*"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."*

It was characteristic of many of us as alcoholics to at least attempt to perform in the grandiose manner. And in harming others we usually succeeded magnificently. So, to say that the first phase of the Eighth Step is a large order is to indulge in understatement which matches our bombastic style.

And yet, however extended be the list of those we have harmed, the fulfillment of this step's admonition need not be a tedious nor a burdensome undertaking. In the first place, let's examine the meaning of the verb: Amend.

Webster's New International Dictionary defines it thus --"To make better, especially in character; to repair, restore; to free from faults, put right, correct, rectify. . ."

There is the credo to which we of A.A. subscribe; the goal we hope to achieve through sobriety. It is both the manifestation of our adherence to the other 11 Steps and our performance of the Eighth itself.

The definition continues:

*"... to change or modify in any way for the better; to recover from illness."*

It was written for us!

We have often heard that our sobriety should be founded on "unselfish selfishness", that we should strive to avoid a lapse into drinking for the benefits we, personally, derive from abstinence. It's not sound, we have been told, to try to stay dry for the sake of a wife or a sweetheart or someone else dear to us.

When we first heard that plan of action outlined, we revolted mildly because it didn't seem to meet the specifications of true altruism. Many of us, as we entered A.A., still yearned for that mystic power to "handle" alcohol and it seemed then that the step we were taking was at least in part --a gesture of devotion to some loved one. Without altruism there didn't seem to be much motive to propel us.

Of course, we soon discovered that "unselfish selfishness" was the firmest foundation for our recovery. We found, in the same way, that we try to help others, not solely through altruistic impulse, but so that we may gain strength.

The principle of "unselfish selfishness" is applicable again in the Eighth Step. We seek to identify all those we have harmed and we assume a willingness to make amends so that --recalling the definition of the word --we may "change . . . for the better" and "recover from illness."

The alternative is retrogression. If we fail to "repair", we can only impair.

L. J.

*Reprinted with permission of the Grapevine, July, 1945*

*June, 1945, Vol 2 No 11*

**FINANCES****July****YTD****Income**

Literature/Merchandise	\$1,798	\$18,901
Group Contributions	1,713	8,647
AA Birthdays	337	1,003
Faithful Five	30	560
Individual/Anonymous	278	428
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,155</b>	<b>29,539</b>

**Expenses**

Bank/Credit Card Fees	47	380
Travel/Licenses/Permits		30
Office Supplies	9	640
Office Repair		684
Contributions		
Payroll Net	1,711	11,977
Payroll Tax	1,113	3,340
Postage		82
Printing		371
Purchases/Lit./Merch.	825	11,487
Insurance		
Rent		2,500
Sales Tax		1,170
Telephone/www	317	1,503
Utilities		500
Computer Equipment		
Computer Software		212
Computer/Maintain		
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>4,036</b>	<b>34,877</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>-5,338</b>
Other Income		
Other Expenses		
<b>NET OTHER INCOME</b>		
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$120</b>	<b>\$-5,338</b>

## 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

1509-2 Pine Ridge Road  
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

Lisa D.  
PO Box 1784  
Pompano Beach, Fl 33061  
(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) Area 15 and District 20; and 3) the General Service Office in New York. 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 aim of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. *The A.A. Group Treasurer, F-96,*

*Service material prepared by the  
General Service Office*



## 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	JULY	YTD
11th Step Prayer & Med., 715482.....	0.....	124
24 Hour Solution .....	0.....	0
Aprendiendo A Vivre, 176467 .....	0.....	0
Back To Basics.....	0.....	0
Beach Bums 641645 .....	0.....	250
Big Book Comes Alive, 710427.....	126.....	276
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.....	105.....	285
Bonita Friday Night.....	0.....	0
Bonita Happy Hour, 670997 .....	281.....	985
Bonita Men, 654428.....	0.....	200
Bonita Morning.....	0.....	408
Bonita Saturday Night .....	0.....	0
Bonita Springs Morning, 678493 .....	0.....	378
Bonita Springs Women's 169127 .....	0.....	908
Bonita Springs Step,134588.....	0.....	40
Bonita Unity .....	0.....	100
Bring Your Own Big Book.....	0.....	0
Brown Bag, 163924 .....	0.....	0
Cake Meeting, 701813.....	0.....	0
Came to Believe, 615490 .....	0.....	0
Candlelight, 606877.....	0.....	0
Comes Of Age .....	0.....	0
Common Solutions, 179613.....	60.....	260
Early Reflections, 653770 .....	0.....	0
Early Riser, 161795 .....	0.....	224
East Trail, 150873.....	0.....	0
Easy Does It, 156979 .....	0.....	0
Free 2 Be, 6700930 .....	68.....	276
Friday Big Book.....	0.....	0
Golden Gate, 123819.....	0.....	0
Good Orderly Direction, 642330 .....	0.....	0
Gratitude Hour, 134223.....	0.....	500
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 .....	50.....	150
Lil'White House 721896.....	0.....	0
Living Sober, 605904 .....	0.....	0
Living Sober Isle of Capri.....	0.....	0
Men Of Naples, 634030 .....	0.....	0
Men's Big Book .....	75.....	75
Monday Night Men Step 724529.....	0.....	0
Monday Noon Daily Reflections .....	0.....	41
Morning Reflections, 660700 .....	0.....	500
Naples Group, 103609.....	500.....	500
Naples Men's, 694322 .....	0.....	200
Naples South, 130210 .....	0.....	0
Naples Young People, 699130 .....	0.....	0
New Dawn, 632504 .....	0.....	600
New Women (Thursday noon).....	200.....	200
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

Group/Meeting	JULY	YTD
One Day At A Time.....	0.....	174
Our Common Welfare .....	0.....	0
Out To Lunch Bunch, 147323.....	0.....	0
Pay It Forward, 704772 .....	0.....	0
Primary Purpose Marco, 146715.....	0.....	0
Saturday Morning Girlfriends 678117.....	0.....	0
Saturday Night Live.....	0.....	0
Spiritual Solutions, 720796.....	0.....	0
Start Where You Are.....	0.....	0
Step By Step.....	0.....	0
Step Into Life.....	0.....	60
Sunday Night Speakers, 665079.....	0.....	0
Sunlight Of the Spirit, 647959.....	0.....	0
Sunset Serenity, 654981 .....	0.....	0
Survivor's, 157268.....	0.....	129
SW 239 BID .....	0.....	0
Swamp Group, 672733.....	20.....	40
Tables Of Naples .....	0.....	76
The Solution Big Book Study Group 632503 .....	0.....	0
Third Tradition,143298.....	0.....	0
Three Legacies, 679400.....	0.....	0
Thursday New Women .....	0.....	0
Unity Monday Noon Step.....	0.....	230
Unity Step.....	0.....	0
Veranda .....	0.....	0
Walk The Steps With Women, 701923.....	125.....	125
Wanderers, Ave Maria.....	0.....	0
We Care, Bonita, 617011.....	0.....	227
Wednesday Step St. Johns .....	0.....	0
Where Are We.....	0.....	0
Women's Spirit .....	0.....	0
Women's Step,159957 .....	0.....	0
YANA, 270553.....	103.....	103

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.



## Gossip, Criticism and Character Assassination

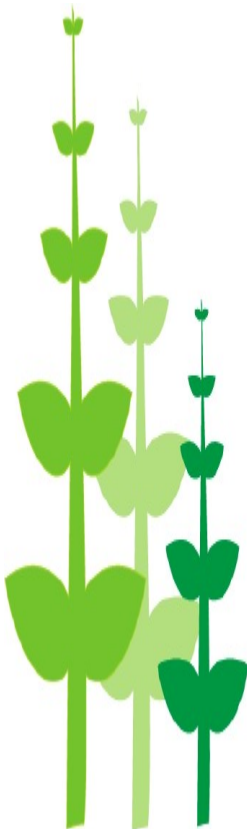
### Understanding, Empathy and Compassion

Hanging on to resentments and criticizing the behavior of others is often a noticeable characteristic of some members of the program that never seem to find the serenity and peace that is mentioned in the promises. For some people it seems impossible to let their guard down. I think that most of us can understand this, simply because we have all have to face this issue and deal with it, to one degree or another, as we go through the twelve-step process. One of the things that I learned when I was faced with this matter was that I had a *self-esteem* problem and I overcorrected, by pointing the faults of others, to somehow make myself appear normal. This never worked for me as I could not fool my *conscience*. Things only got worse. I still worked through the steps and did what I could at the time. No one gets it perfect the first time, but we can make a second effort at it when we have established a track record of living by principles. AA meetings are a training ground for how we treat others and if we can't accept the people there, it's a cinch we won't do it outside of the rooms.

Everyone that comes to AA brings with them their own assortment of mental, emotional, spiritual, and material problems, and none of us are without these concerns. If we didn't have them, we wouldn't need this program. We all feel somewhat vulnerable and we establish our own firewalls, with the help of our EGO'S, to protect ourselves from our perception of what those other people are doing, saying, and thinking. We each might establish hard and fast protective reactions, mentally and verbally to protect our own turf. With so many different personalities brought together in one group, it's very hard to let down our guards, after all, we all feel somewhat justified when pointing out the faults of others. This is what the alcoholic personality does.

With the understanding that *most forms of criticism and character assassination stem from low self-esteem*, it occurred to me that I was just as guilty of the very things that I was accusing them of. I likened it to *two old men in a convalescent home hitting each other with their canes because one was not walking fast enough for the other*. I had to step up to the plate and become strong enough to *look deeper into their motives and understand what caused them to behave the way they did, and not be threatened by their outside behavior*. I cannot express in words the mental freedom that this principle has produced in me. When I see someone acting out, my first thought is *not judgmental in nature but of empathy and compassion*. My next thought is "what I can do to help him or her". Having adopted this approach, I have come to terms with all the people that I inner act with on a day to day basis and I no longer in conflict with anyone. To me, *they are all like kids just learning how to do life*. They all have problems and I am not going to be one of their problems. I must be strong enough to replaced words like *resentment, judgment, and criticism* with *empathy, understanding and compassion*. Today I have no adversaries that I can think of, and *peace of mind is the natural result of this approach*.

I find no exceptions to this principle and I cannot be selective about who I apply it to. Everyone gets amnesty in my book. All that mental gymnastics about "those other people" is a distant memory and I can't think of a single time that practicing this principle didn't serve me well. The only one that is sorry for this profound and life changing transition is my EGO, but about that; who am I to criticize? 😊 by Rick R.



### The Tree of Unselfishness, By Rick R.

Selfishness, Self-Centeredness, the root of all our flaws.  
 When first I heard those simple words, it really gave me pause.  
 Could this be the answer to, the troubles of my past?  
 Removing all the guilt and shame, my conscience had amassed.  
 Unselfishness was not a word; my EGO could embrace.  
 For it was much more satisfied when I lived in disgrace.  
 When in the clutch of my disease, I really had no choice.  
 But in the comfort of A.A, I heard God's loving voice.  
 He had me check my motives for, my habits and my deeds.  
 And redirect my thoughts to meeting, other people's needs.  
 As I adopted this approach, not looking for approval.  
 Joy filled that dark and guilty space, left after their removal.  
 Unselfish motives are the seeds. that spawn this loving tree.  
 The fruit of which brings happiness, to both them and me.  
 These things could not have happened, when my EGO had control.  
 It was my choice to summon up, my Conscience for that role.  
 Unselfishness has been the answer, to a life of grief.  
 The more I put it into play, the more I get relief.  
 It's my Conscience now that monitors, my motives at their roots.  
 The result has been a healthy tree, and I enjoy the fruits.

## The Birthday Club

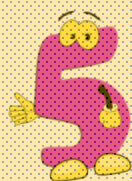
Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the AA Birthday Club? Sign up today and be featured in the *Courier*. Show your support for your Central Office. A donation of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety will help carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer. Envelopes available at Central Office or from your Intergroup Representative.



Ron P.	49 years
Ron L.	42 years
Don M.	39 years
Jim B.	38 years
Dennis F.	35 years
Rad W.	34 years
Jackie T. F.	36 years
Judy W.	34 years
Steve K.	28 years
Peter F.	24 years
Bill S.	18 years
Mary B.	18 years
Laura T. F.	4 years
Bree F.	3 years



## Faithful Fivers Needed



### 2020 Faithful Fiver Club

***Welcome Wendy T.***

***Ron L., James B., Theresa R., Judy W., Kathryn Mc., Bill S.,  
Jim B., Tim A., Wendy T.***

We are members of A.A. who want the hand of A.A. always to be there in the Naples, Florida area.

***It's easy to join!***

Use a Check or Credit Card to contribute monthly, or one time.

Stop by the Central Office or Telephone the Central Office for a one time Credit Card charge.

***\$5.00 per month or \$60.00 per year!***

Your membership directly supports 12Step work in District 20 and Central Office Operations.

**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:**

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chairdistrict20aa@gmail.com

**Alt. Chair:**

Peter C., 784-7725

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**Treasurer:**

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mbrown8869@gmail.com

**Registrar:**

Jill M., 309-3879

**Secretary:**

Dianna M., 248-6565

diannamusse@gmail.com

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

treatment@district20aa.org

Business meeting the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Corrections**

Jeff K., 776-5673

kepkajeffery@yahoo.com

Business meeting the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Public Information/CPC**

Dawn L., 269-8251

Business meeting the second Wednesday of each month at 7pm, 24 Hour Club

**Grapevine/Literature**

Steve K., 430-9110

Business meeting the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Archives**

Laurel B., 451-0095

naplesboff@hotmail.com

Business meeting 3rd Saturday @ 24 Hour Club at 11am

**Current Practices**

Jerry E., 776-6767

jeddleman@aol.com

*The Courier* is published monthly by the *Naples Area Intergroup of Alcoholic Anonymous* with an office located at 1509-2 Pine Ridge Road, 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..

**Contributions from our readers are****District 20****Business Meeting:**

Last Thursday of the Month, 7pm  
New Attitudes Club  
4133 Tamiami Trail E.  
(Lakewood & E 41)  
Behind Speedway Gas

**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

**MONTHLY  
NAPLES  
INTERGROUP  
MEETING  
Central Office  
1509-2 Pine Ridge Rd.  
(next to 24 Hour Club)**

**First Wednesday of  
month at 7:00pm**

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

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www.aanaples.org

**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., Opportunity  
Ivan B., Eric S.,  
Ken H., Diane B.,  
Nikki E., Dan J.  
Dave K, Pat S.  
Opportunity  
...and loyal Substitutes