

THE COURIER

Naples Area Intergroup
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November, 2020

November is Gratitude Month

GratITUDE is always in order, but many groups have designated November as a particular time to give thanks to the A.A. program. It has been that way since the 1940s, when the General Service Board held small "gratitude dinners," which were replaced in the 1960s by larger "gratitude" luncheons. These were ended in 1968 because they were deemed too expensive.

In 1956 and 1957, there were floor actions at the annual General Service Conferences recommending that Thanksgiving week in those years be designated A.A. Gratitude Week." **Acceptance may be the answer to all our problems, but gratitude has to be a close second.**

As many in A.A. have discovered, gratitude is a sure cure for self-pity. And can you be resentful at the same time that you're grateful? Some in recovery will coax their thinking onto spiritual lines with gratitude lists.

GRATITUDE

A Full and Thankful Heart...

One exercise that I practice is to try for a full inventory of my blessings and then for a right acceptance of the many gifts that are mine-both temporal and spiritual. Here I try to achieve a state of joyful gratitude. When such a brand of gratitude is repeatedly affirmed and pondered, it can finally displace the natural tendency to congratulate myself on whatever progress I may have been enabled to make in some areas of living. I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heart heal must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion that we can ever know.

Bill W.

STEP ELEVEN: “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. “

TRADITION ELEVEN: “Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.”

CONCEPT ELEVEN: “The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.”

11th Step Prayer: Higher Power, as I understand You,
I pray to keep my connection with You
Open and clear from the confusion of daily life.
Through my prayers and meditation I ask especially for
Freedom from self-will, rationalization, and wishful thinking.
I pray for the guidance of correct thought and positive action.
Your will Higher Power, not mine, be done.

TRADITIONS—CHECKLIST

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

1. Do I sometimes promote AA so fanatically that I make it seem unattractive?
2. Am I always careful to keep the confidences reposed in me as an AA member?
3. Am I careful about throwing AA names around—even within the Fellowship?
4. Am I ashamed of being a recovered, or recovering, alcoholic?
5. What would AA be like if we were not guided by the ideas in Tradition Eleven? Where would I be?
6. Is my AA sobriety attractive enough that a sick drunk would want such a quality for himself?

A New Holiday Perspective

Bringing Joy to the Less Fortunate

By Rick R.

How appropriate it seems that there are twelve months in a year, and we have twelve steps in the program. November is often referred to the Gratitude month, mainly due the celebration of Thanksgiving. The joy of good living is the theme of Step Twelve and it blends right in with the Christmas holiday season in December and ending with the New Year's Eve celebra-



tion. This time of year does bring a lot of joy to many of us but it also brings *distress to some of the less fortunate ones* who have yet to been blessed with the gift of sobriety and peace of mind, *in and outside of A.A.*

During my drinking days I used to be extremely uncomfortable about the holidays. I never knew how to act around normal people unless I was half smashed. When invited by one of my siblings to Thanksgiving dinner, I felt like *a charity case* and would rather just hang out at the bar where I felt safe. I never got into the spirit of reaching out to others. My family always celebrated the different holidays, especially Christmas, and I would always (due to my discomfort) put a damper on it by complaining about the tacky gifts that people would buy for each other at Christmas and the mad rush to go shopping and the commercializing facade that it had become. Any excuse was better than facing *me* and the miserable wretch I had become.

After being sober for several years it occurred to me that I still had some of those same attitudes, and that I was still holding on to them to some degree largely due to the inconvenience of it all. I explained this problem to a dear friend once, and he asked, "*Does the rest of the family enjoy the holidays?*" I said yes. He then said, "*Why don't you just take a back seat and just watch the joy in their eyes as they experience these things.*" I did exactly what he suggested and when I started to observe my wife and two adolescent girls and *the childlike*

innocence and happiness it brought to them; it gave me a whole new appreciation for this time of year. It brought *tears of Joy* to my eyes and I no longer wanted to be the grouch, putting a damper on the joy that they were having. I have been following this line of thinking ever since and it has changed my whole perspective concerning these things.

This change of attitude has inspired me to apply the unselfish lessons that I have come to understand and now I spend the holiday season filled with Joy. *If it works like that for the holidays, then why can't I bring it with me for the rest of the year?* This has been my mission ever since my friend suggested it, and I am always looking for the opportunity to brighten the lives of people less fortunate than myself. I try to do these things *anonymously and without fanfare*. I also try to consider the discomfort that I used to feel when I was the one on the receiving end of a charitable gesture. I am careful to do these things in a way that *preserves the dignity of that other person*. I do not have to wait for the holidays to do these things. Every day is a holiday in and outside of my home, and you can believe me when I say; I reap more than my share of the joy. I hope this brings a new perspective to those who, like me, had trouble enjoying this time of year and I hope you all have a joyful Holiday Season, and many more.

A Deeper Look at the Word: LOVE

Love is as Love Does

By Rick R.

The longer I attend A. A. meetings the more aware I become of the evolution of the subject matter of meeting topics. In my early days in the 1970s the topic was normally about drunkalogues or whatever the leader wanted to talk about that day. Most of the meetings that I attend today are literature-based meetings and there is amplifying information in the literature that reinforces the topic. On page 164 in the Big Book it says "*We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us.*" Today we have access to all that they had learned up to that point in time plus everything we have learned since then and the sharing in the meetings is so much deeper as the result of those disclosures. I was at a meeting recently and the topic was "*Love without strings*" Sept. 28 in The Daily Reflections. It was interesting to hear the differing

Continued on page 4

IT is often wisely said in A.A. that we should not become over-anxious, should not expect to get the whole program overnight, but should take the steps one at time when we feel that we are ready for them. This means that although we are not ready at a given time to take this step or that one and are, therefore, not then taking it, we should be disposing ourselves toward it. It never means that we should plan on avoiding any of the steps.

Practice of the 11th Step is the surest method of disposing oneself toward all the other steps. It was only through seeking contact with God through meditation and prayer that some of us came to believe in Him and became willing to turn our wills and our lives over to Him. The wish to improve that contact, the searching for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out, gives us strength to make amends, to do the things necessary to remake our lives. Unless we improve our contact with God we will gradually lose it. There will be a slow return to indifference and we will suffer that let-down that so many experience after a few months in A.A. Gradually old desires return with increasingly great urgency. The alteration in conduct that we have made for a few months has not been sufficiently sustained to lead to a change in character, and the deeper habit patterns reassert themselves. Growth in spiritual understanding alone will dispose us to make the effort to recondition ourselves, to change our emotional attitudes and bring about a true character change.

For specific suggestions for practicing the 11th Step we turn to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, as we do on all A.A. questions, before going ahead on our own. Applying the wisdom we find there, we turn with newly awakened interest and intensity to the practices of our particular religious denomination, if we have one; we sometimes select and memorize a few set prayers; we may study the recorded thoughts of others; but in any event we make it a practice in the morning to ask God to guide us during the day, and thank Him at the day's close for His many blessings. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends, but ask especially for freedom from self-will and knowledge of God's will for us.

Some of us have found the following verse helpful on awakening, when all our wishes and hopes for the day rush at us like wild animals; the first thing we must do is shove them all back, and listen to that other voice, letting a calmer, quieter, stronger life flow into us: "Every morning rest your arms awhile upon the window-sill of Heaven and gaze upon your Lord, and with that vision in your heart turn strong to meet your day."

All of which, of course, is calculated to keep us from taking that first drink. It works --it really does.

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Thought to Ponder

Growing old is inevitable, growing up is optional, growing spiritually is up to you.

Continued from page 3

perceptions mainly based on the differing lengths of sobriety and how the word Love was perceived.

I looked up the word in the Thesaurus and it is all about feelings like fondness, passion, adoration, affection, and many others. Over the years I have heard it said that "I can love him, but I don't have to like him." Is it him I don't like or is it his behavior I don't like? All of us come to A.A. with behavioral problems. It is not about him. It is about me being judgmental. There were comments about sexual attraction or "*erotic love*" which are common in most online definitions but that is not our purpose when dealing with the word Love. There are many definitions of the word LOVE and for our purpose, I believe the one that Scott Peck writes about in his book "*The Road Less Traveled*" He defines love as "*The will to extend oneself for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth.*" He implies that it is not that version that we see on the movie screen. To me this means that love is, caring for, and nurturing another person. I can love everyone, even if they do not love me back. *It is not about them*; it implies that it's about me and my actions. As I took this approach, one by one I defused and neutralized all those mental conflicts and accepted everyone exactly as they are. *No longer do they crowd my thinking.* Do those people that still have behavior problems sometimes cross my boundaries? Oh yes, they do. Sometimes their EGO is threatened by something I shared at a meeting or in the community and they need to defend their position. Today I recognize these symptoms in others, and I try to be understanding about what I say at a meeting as to not make him/her uncomfortable. This takes time and I never respond to inuendoes when someone is trying to draw me into an argument. It takes two to tango and over a period of time he gets to know who I really am, and he is no longer threatened by the thing I share. I try to Care for and Nurture everyone and at some point, in time I have run out of adversaries, that I know of, in fact, I become their best advocate. Today, the word Love is not a noun. Love is a verb. Love is as Love does. *Understand them, wish the best for them, and be willing to help them when you can.* Who could understand the behavior of an alcoholic more than another alcoholic who has experienced their own development in the program? The founding principles of A. A. is the caring for and nurturing of another alcoholic. If that is not love, then what is? With all my love, I rest my case.

TRADITIONS ARE DEAR to the hearts of all people traditions of home, family and the country in which we live.

We rejoice in their observance and count our blessings.

Equally dear to our membership, and in some respects more so, are the time-proven Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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vember has become *Traditions Month* in the Grapevine when, out of heartfelt gratitude, we acknowledge our debt to a Higher Power for our second legacy of *unity*, without which we would lack cohesion, progress and universal accord.

In this issue we call to your attention Bill W.'s article dealing with Traditions Seven and Eight (page 7), along with Earle M.'s account of coming to understand the Traditions as they relate to his AA life (page 12).

We alcoholics who have made our peace with life as it is, and not as we might desire it to be, will find fruition and promise in November, the dedicated month of our Twelve Traditions and Gratitude.

Like the English colonists who came to America as founding fathers to find freedom of religious worship, and whose memory we observe on Thanksgiving Day, we too are pilgrims in search of a new way of life--freedom from alcoholism.

"But For the Grace of God" is especially applicable during our Traditions Month and more so on Thanksgiving Day.

Let's remember to say it with joyful and grateful hearts to Him from Whom all blessings flow. Let's also count those blessings which are beyond computation.

Our Common Welfare Comes First

I remember a time when I insisted that my drinking was a "victimless crime". I was only hurting myself - that drinking and driving was not that big of a deal if I kept at or just below the speed limit. Obviously, I had some serious self-centered thinking. I hurt people that loved me; I broke the law and endangered others. I could have badly injured or even killed someone - kind of like the decision not to wear a mask in public during this Covid-19 pandemic. What does this have to do with sobriety? For me, a lot. Whether we like Governor DeSantis or not, is not relevant. There is a state-wide order that requires the wearing of masks at an indoor location that is not a residence. The mandate carries the weight of law. As a person over the age of 60, I am now in a "high risk age group." I have a tendency to catch bronchitis every winter. When I have an attack of bronchitis, or if I get the flu, I do not go out in public. I don't want to pass on my illness to anyone else, or get myself sicker. Many of the people I associate with in meetings are my age and older. At most of my meetings, close to 50% and in some cases, more than 50% are over the age of 60. I used to attend 4-5 meetings a week before the Covid-19 pandemic hit. I am now attending two meetings a week. I won't attend some of my previous meetings (or lead in person at meetings) as attendees at these meetings have decided that wearing of masks are optional. There are people at these meetings not wearing masks, not social distancing and still hugging and kissing each other hello and goodbye. This frightens me. Many of our meetings are held in small rooms. The ventilation in these rooms is poor and do not circulate air very well. Poor ventilation and Covid -19 virus make for a petri dish type environment especially for those of us in the 60+ age range. A recent Akron Beacon Journal article pointed out that over 70% of Covid-19 cases are in this over 60 age group. Our Founders created the Steps to teach us how to live. The Traditions were created so we should have a guide for governing ourselves.

GROUPS??? MEETINGS???

What's the difference?

The A.A. Group-The Final Voice of the Fellowship

In Alcoholics Anonymous, a Group is very different than an AA meeting. Generally speaking, a meeting forms first, and eventually matures into a home group. Typically, a new meeting is begun by a few AAs (sometimes with a resentment and a coffee pot) and if the new meeting fills a local need, it lives on. If the new meeting committee is wise, they recruit a membership right away. In many areas, there are AA meetings that take place in public spaces, are listed in our AA meeting schedules, but have no effective membership at all.

If, because the meeting takes place in a tourist area, a cruise ship, seasonal resort, or in a hospital or institutional setting, some meetings never form into groups, even though they maintain a presence for years or even decades.

Sometimes, if a meeting survives for years without organizing into a home group, it is because there is some "maternal" entity that allows the meeting to be held without exacting the price of commitment from the attendees. It could be a well-meaning old timer who makes the coffee and organizes the room for years at a time, never understanding that this support actually damages the meeting by keeping it from maturing into a group.

A "smothered group" also fails in its primary purpose in important ways, because there are no members to form the basis of the service committees that a healthy group forms. This means that there is no General Service Representative, so the meeting is isolated from the decision-making branches of Alcoholics Anonymous. If a recovering alcoholic only attends this meeting or several similar meetings, they may never know what it means to be a member of a world-wide organization. Service committees in a healthy group send members out to jails and hospitals, schools and detox units, to carry the message to suffering alcoholics. This part of the Twelfth Step is central to the continuing sobriety of many AAs.

Sometimes the smothering only takes the form of denying members the joy of service at the group level, and attendees never make the coffee, great at the door, cleanup after the meeting, or make cookies for the meeting. Someone thinks they are doing them a favor, but newcomers are being denied the "rites of passage", the heart-felt feeling of belonging that group service brings to the newcomer's heart.

So, if you are currently attending a "smothered" meeting or want to start a group, contact the General Service Office in New York and request a guide to starting a meeting. You will receive a Group Handbook and you will be able to register your group so that it will be "connected" to the rest of AA.

For complete information regarding Groups, please see the AA Pamphlet P-16, "The A.A. Group, where it all begins" available at Central Office or from any Group's literature rack.

BE GRATEFUL YOU'RE NOT ON FIRE

A few days after I came to AA, I was at a meeting and the topic was gratitude. With just a couple of days of sobriety, I was still full of anger, resentment, shame, guilt and fear. I felt the world had failed to give me what I believed it owed me and everyone in it had let me down. Life was painful and hopeless. I absolutely did not feel grateful for anything!

When it came my turn to share, I said "My name is Regan, and I have nothing to be grateful for so I'll pass." The long timer next to me leaned over and whispered in my ear "Be grateful you're not on fire!". What the heck did that mean? I turned and glared at him with the meanest look I could muster, but he just smiled at me. That old man and his comment made me even more angry! I thought about him and his irritating statement for a couple of days, and stewed and chewed on it. I still continued going to meetings, listening and trying to figure out what people were talking about. It took me a few weeks, but eventually I began to understand what that old man had been trying to tell me.

The day he said that to me, I was totally focused on all the bad things in my life. I was pretty much homeless and had been sleeping in cockroach infested abandoned buildings and even a dumpster before coming back to AA. I had no job and no money, lots of legal and financial problems, some of which I was looking at jail time for. I had abandoned my son, destroyed my marriage, and my father had told me if I ever came near the family again they would call the police. There was nobody who understood how I felt or who even wanted to be around me let alone help me! Now, here I was living in some halfway house in a town I didn't even like, and sitting in this stupid AA meeting with all these losers? How could anyone be grateful for any of that?

But gradually, after a few weeks of listening to others in meetings share their experience strength and hope I began to see that good things had started happening in my life. True, I still had no job, failed marriage, was not with my son. I had no money, and lots of legal problems yet to face, including jail time. But I was sober! I had a roof over my head and a warm bed to sleep in. I had food to eat and clothes to wear. I was surrounded by people who really understood me and were willing to help me, expecting nothing in return. These might seem like little things, but from where I had come from, they were huge. I had a chance to start a new life. I believe this is what that old man was saying to me. No matter what is going on in my life, no matter how bad things seem, I can always find SOMETHING in my life to be grateful for if I am just willing to look hard enough. I have never seen a sober alcoholic with gratitude in their heart go out and get drunk.

Even now, many years later, I can still put myself in a place that seems utterly hopeless with seemingly unbearable circumstances that I am sure I will not survive! Then I remember what that old man said and I know there has to be something to be grateful for if I am only willing to change my attitude and look for it. I might have to start with just being grateful I am not on fire, but I can always build from there.

Regan G., Mesa, AZ

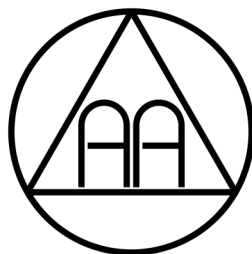
With permission NO BOOZE NEWS, East Valley, AZ

HEE HAW HOOTENANNY

Sugden Park, by Lake Avalon

Sunday, November 15, from 10am to 4pm

FOOD FUN FELLOWSHIP!



Tickets only \$20

Guest Speaker: ROGER H., Seminole, FL

Dinner Catered By "Good Guy's Barbecue"

Proceeds support The Serenity Club of Southwest Florida, Inc. a Florida Nonprofit Corporation

FINANCES**Oct.****YTD****Income**

Literature/Merchandise	\$2,069	\$26,117
Group Contributions	1,658	12,654
AA Birthdays		1,120
Faithful Five	30	610
Individual/Anonymous	109	919

Total Income

3,865 41,419

Expenses

Bank/Credit Card Fees	53	519
Travel/Licenses/Permits		30
Office Supplies	110	867
Office Improve/Repair		1,104
Contributions		
Payroll Net	1,711	17,110
Payroll Tax	1,113	4,454
Postage	21	107
Printing		371
Purchases/Lit./Merch.	691	14,160
Insurance		567
Rent	500	3,500
Sales Tax	176	1,808
Telephone/www	202	2,172
Utilities	100	700
Computer Equipment		
Computer Software		251
Computer/Maintain		

Total Expenses

4,691 47,720

Net Ordinary Income

Other Income

Other Expenses

NET OTHER INCOME

-823 -6,301

NET INCOME

-826 -6,301

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	OCT	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.....	500
Big Book Comes Alive, 710427.....	90.....	366
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.....	285
Bonita Friday Night.....	0.....	0
Bonita Happy Hour, 670997	348.....	1,333
Bonita Men, 654428.....	100.....	500
Bonita Morning.....	293.....	701
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.....	25
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.....	0.....	260
Early Reflections, 653770	0.....	0
Early Riser, 161795	300.....	1,024
East Trail, 150873.....	0.....	0
Easy Does It, 156979.....	0.....	0
FCYPAA.....	72.....	72
Free 2 Be, 670930	0.....	276
Friday Big Book.....	0.....	0
Go To Any Length, 305375.....	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	115.....	565
Living Sober, 605904.....	0.....	0
Living Sober Isle of Capri.....	0.....	0
Men Of Naples, 634030	15.....	49
Men's Big Book	0.....	75
Monday Night Men Step 724529.....	0.....	0
Monday Noon Daily Reflections	0.....	64
Morning Reflections, 660700	50.....	550
Naples Group, 103609.....	0.....	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).....	0.....	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	OCT	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.....	540
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.....	75.....	75
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.....	0.....	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.....	0.....	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.....	200.....	399
ZOOM Noon	0.....	75

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.



GRATITUDE

What can one say about gratitude? For one thing it is to me a way of showing that no matter what your higher power sends your way, there is something good in it. You might not see it right away, but time will tell. One thing is that during this Covid-19 pandemic, I can't see where anyone could be grateful for all of the deaths. Also, the lasting health problems that many survivors might have to deal with. So, with that said, I try to find reasons to be grateful every day. Right now, I can be grateful that neither myself nor my family has contracted the virus. I can be grateful that even though I have not been able to get to in person meetings, I am still sober and am keeping up with my Program. I am grateful for systems in place that make it possible for the newcomer to be helped, even if it is in a different way than normal. I am fortunate that I am retired and don't have to go out to work, or work from home. The quarantine has given me more time at home, and I have been able to catch up on reading and found some new AA literature to read. It took me back to some of the literature I read a long time ago. I am looking at this time as a benefit to my Program because I am thinking some new thoughts because of new reading. Most of all, it has helped me to realize that of all of the things I have to be grateful for since getting sober the thing that I am most grateful for is the fact that I have a life now. I realize that I have to thank my Higher Power for my sobriety and I have to do my part, but there is also life, family, hobbies that I have because of my sobriety and I can never take that for granted. We learn in our Program that what comes with that gratitude is the spirit of giving away what has been given to us. Without the people in the Program and our fellowship and learning together I would be just another person reading books and going about my life as though I was all that mattered. As long as things go right for me, I can just be alone and happy with my family and my blessings. But that becomes an empty life. Sooner or later there is no more growth, and I would become complacent. Another exercise that I did during this time to myself was to go back over my life before sobriety and look at all of the blessings that I had before that I did not see or care about. Now I can see that my life was not all bad. I can appreciate the good that was in my life. The people who helped me when I was ungrateful and even rejected their help. It was a blessing that I did not see before. By the time I came into the Program, I was completely broken and had untreated mental illness and did nothing but exist. I don't want my new life to be one of just existing, even though I now have happiness and wellbeing. I feel like I need to contribute to society in order to grow. The new people that I meet help me to stay fresh and remember where I came from. I get satisfaction knowing that my past can help someone else.

GRATITUDE

In pondering the topic of Gratitude, I looked up the dictionary definition. I was surprised to learn that "gratitude" doesn't just mean the quality of being thankful and readiness to show appreciation. "Gratitude" also means the readiness to return kindness. So being a grateful person involves more than just counting your blessings, it means trying to give back what you have been so freely given. Back in the day, before I became an alcoholic and was just a drunk, I was ungrateful. To my parents, my employers, my schools, my friends, my family, I was restless, irritable, and discontent. I never stopped to think about all the things I had to be grateful for, except maybe on Thanksgiving. Since then, I have been beaten into a state of reasonableness. I realize now that I have been fortunate beyond measure. I have not been given what I deserved, but instead have been given so much more. So I do pause my day occasionally and think of ten things I am grateful for, right now in the present. From being in the fresh air, to breathing another day, to having the self-awareness to even think of a gratitude list. I try to have that quality of being thankful, the attitude of gratitude. However, I need to work more on the other part of that definition of "gratitude," the readiness to return kindness. Being grateful is bound to result in me becoming a more positive and humble person. But actually showing my gratitude through returning the kindness extended to me in AA is what could really make me into a grateful person. In the book, Living Sober, there is a section on gratitude, that includes the sentence, "Life was meant to be enjoyed, and we mean to enjoy it" (p. 48). Giving back, being engaged in the Program, helping others, seems like the opposite of being restless, irritable, and discontent. It might free me up to enjoy life more, even in these difficult days. When I am focused on the next thing I want out of life, I can't enjoy the present. It is like having a wonderful Thanksgiving feast spread before me, and worrying about what to have for my next meal. Being grateful, truly appreciative, and looking for ways to give back -that is a great way to live in the moment and enjoy life. Happy Thanksgiving, brothers and sisters, and please survive sober until we can shake hands again at a meeting!

The Birthday Club

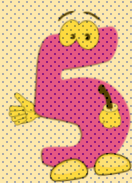
Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the AA Birthday Club? Sign up today and be featured in the *Courier*. Show your support for your Central Office. A donation of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety will help carry the message to alcoholics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



Ron P.	50 years
Ron L.	42 years
Don M.	40 years
Jim B.	38 years
Dennis F.	35 years
Rad W.	35 years
Jackie T. F.	36 years
Judy W.	34 years
Steve K.	28 years
Peter F.	24 years
Eileen D.	22 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

***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.)

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Chairman:

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chairdistrict20aa@gmail.com

Alt. Chair:

Peter C., 784-7725

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Treasurer:

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

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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 encouraged.

Submissions are edited for space and clarity only.

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**

Area 15; Panel 69

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

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

Office Volunteers:

Jean K., Peggy W.
Dave K., Eric S.
Ken H., Anne Marie C.
Nikki E., Don B.
Ivan B, Pat S.
Peggy G., Opportunity
...and loyal Substitutes