

# THE COURIER

Naples Area Intergroup  
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April 2023

**It is said that every alcoholic has his own rock bottom, his own gutter.** I had watched my career, my profession and my health vanish without appreciable effort or anything except the increasing tempo of my drinking.

**But one day .....** twenty-one years ago, I was ordered out of my home and family! My own mother had finally decided that I was useless and un-helpable. That was my particular gutter. Not until then had I been willing to face up to how far I had gone down in life.

It was this that brought me to A.A. No one led me there, I came to it myself. I came in desperation, without any hope of anything really happening. The best I expected was that I might possibly manage with its help to keep off another drunk until I had smoothed things out at home.

I was very sick, in the jitters and doped with drugs; mentally sick, confused, and unable to divorce my thoughts from drink; spiritually sick, for I no longer had any hope in anyone or anything, and no longer any faith in anyone, anything or any God.

Most of what I heard that night went in and came straight out again. I received a confused idea that all I had to do was to stay dry for one day, and that I should have to pray, what? Me? And that if I only came back to the next meeting all would be well.

No, it was what I saw that struck home to me. What happened that night to me was a rekindling of a spark of Hope. I heard men describe their drinking lives; I saw them! They were flesh and blood before me. They had had the jitters too. They too had taken those early morning walks to the market pubs, like me; they understood, as I hadn't been able to make anyone else understand, that men like me didn't go out to get drunk—it just happened!

They had been doing all the strange things that I was still doing; they had been thinking in the same crazy way that I was still thinking... and yet they had found a way to recover after all. There was hope for me! What they could do, perhaps I could do as well.

I walked home alone after that meeting, my mind racing and still confused. Now that I again was myself, I hardly dared to keep on hoping. For these others... yes, they had recovered. But for me, how could it happen? I never had that kind of luck! Yet, that tiny voice that there is hope kept whispering "They did it... they could do it... why shouldn't you... if you really try with them?"

That faint hope did keep me dry for the next few days to the next meeting. That same small little hope set me off on the way to recovery and happiness. **That same hope can do as much for anyone else.**

Jackville O'C., Dublin, Ireland, Editor "Targets For Thought"  
[Central Bulletin](#) Archives, June 1968



## ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS PREAMBLE:

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or Institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety. (AA Grapevine, Inc.)



## APRIL ... The FOURTH Month Of Alcoholics Anonymous

**STEP FOUR:** "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

**TRADITION FOUR:** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole."

**TRADITION FOUR: (Long Form)** With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.

**CONCEPT FOUR:** "Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation," taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge."

**474<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer:** "God, Please help me to be free of anger and to see that the world and its people have dominated me. Show me that the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real, has the power to actually kill me. Help me to master my resentments by understanding that the people who wrong me were perhaps spiritually sick. Please help me show those I resent the same Tolerance, Pity and Patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend.\*\* Help me to see that this is a sick man. Father, please show me how I can be helpful to him and save me from being angry. Lord, help me to avoid retaliation or argument. I know I can't be helpful to all people, but at least show me how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one. Thy will be done."(66:2, 66:3, 66:4, 67:0, 67:1)

### TRADITIONS—CHECKLIST

This is a Checklist for Tradition FOUR.

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1. Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in AA?
2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of Loners in Alaska? Of Internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?
3. Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths—his lengths, not mine—to stay sober?
6. Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

**“A Spiritual Overhaul” ... cont. from March 2023**

Donald Wood – Ft. Myers, Florida

April 2023

I returned to my lanai after taking my dog Fiona out for a quick bathroom break. Based on the brevity of the event, I suspect she was more angling for the reward treat upon return from the excursion than from any serious calling of nature. Between Fiona and the grandkids, I had become an easy mark. My friend looked up from the paper he was perusing and smiled. “I like what you have done here, pulling together some short prayers from the material in the book to start your morning quiet time. Especially the way you have them labeled, ‘Just Checking In’ or ‘Possible Difficult Day Ahead’ and the others. And you say that the way you decide which one to use that morning is based upon the morning instructions on page 86, ‘*On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day*’ - is that right?”

“That’s part of it.” I responded. “What do I have going that day, what is on my calendar, where am I going, who am I going to be seeing that day? I follow the directions and ask myself those questions before I even get out of bed. Like the book says, ‘upon awakening’, pretty simple, right?” “Yeah, I get it,” my friend responded. “So what constitutes ‘An Alanon Kind of Day’?” “Yeah,” I replied, “That is a good one, I could probably apply that every day of my life as it is about my relationships with other people, especially family members. Go ahead and read aloud the first couple of sentences and you will see what I mean.”

“OK,” my friend began to read, ‘*Please God help me today to give each one of my relationships over to you. Help me to stop trying to control these relationships and help me to be at peace with all those I meet today. Help me to stop my wanting to control people today through self-will or justification of my own omnipotence...*’” I raised my hand and smiled, “OK, that is good, you see where I am going with this one, right? It doesn’t matter how long I have been sober; I still need God’s help in my relationships with other people and probably even more so with the people I profess to love. I would like to tell you that I am patient, non-judgmental, and tolerant of others every single moment of every single day but that is just not true. I may not express my criticism of another person out loud, but I sure still think it! Thank God I don’t say it out loud, but I am still guilty of thinking that I know what is best for you and everyone else on the planet. It is really self-will, wanting to control others because I can fall into that trap of thinking I know what is best for me, you, and everyone else!”

“Wow, that is quite an admission after having been sober as long as you have” my friend replied. “It is the truth,” I responded. “It is important that I tell you that. The rooms of AA are filled with imperfect sinners, not perfect saints. That’s part of the reason why it works so well. We are not bonded together by our virtue but by our defects. Today I am aware of my character defects and my shortcomings because of the tools that we are given in the program and because I make the effort to actually apply them to my life. That is the key. The German writer Johann Goethe wrote, ‘Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.’”

“Committing time each morning to set myself up for the day with quiet time is essential but it is also the last step in the process that began the night before during my evening review.” “Wait, what’s that?” My friend inquired quizzically. “Taking a few minutes to review my day before I go to sleep often helps me to uncover some less-than-spiritual actions or thinking that occurred during my day. I may have glossed over an instance of my being impatient, judgmental, or trying to play God and the evening review helps me identify those occurrences. Taking pen to paper is always preferred and I encourage the guys I work with to do that, but I have to admit that I have fallen into the easier, softer route of doing it in my head. Over time, I have memorized the ten questions that the Big Book offers as a starter kit, have you been doing that at night?” I asked.

Continued on page 4.

## A Spiritual Overhaul – continued from page 3.

My friend's facial expression changed from quizzical to panicked as he blurted out, "Well, to be honest, I knew you were going to be getting around to asking me about that, no chance that is an optional activity, huh?" "Ah, no, that is really not an option if you are intent on thoroughly following the directions," I replied smiling while shaking my head. "Think about it. There is a synergy between the evening and morning directions." "What do you mean by that, a synergy?" "A synergy means that the working together of multiple elements produces an effect greater than the sum of their individual effects. I take the evening review in which I have identified some things that I could have done better that day and in the morning I ask God to help me in that area. Couple that with what I have after considering my plans for the day, and I have a pretty good idea of what I am going to ask God to help me with that day. Certainly, a good place to start, right?"

My friend thought for a few seconds and then responded, "Yeah, that does make sense. So like for example, I got a little worked up with a customer yesterday. It wasn't a blow-up or anything, he just didn't seem to understand what I was trying to tell him about the way I was doing the job at his house and I kind of got a little short about it. Nothing serious but later on the ride back home I felt a little bad. I realized I could have handled the situation a little better, been a little more patient I guess. Is that when you would go to an 'Alanon Kind of Day'?"

"Well," I replied, "That is one of the reasons why I encourage guys to create their own prayers from the material in the Big Book as well as their own personal reading material. I consider an 'Alanon Kind of Day' to be one where I am dealing with family stuff for the most part. It is so easy for me to drift back into the danger of being sure that I am right and taking for granted that my point of view could not possibly be wrong when it comes to others. I can justify my thinking along these lines in a hundred ways and so yeah, it is a good reminder for me to ask God to help me to not judge others by what I think is right. I cannot afford the luxury of being intolerant or critical of other people today so in an 'Alanon Kind of Day', I ask God to help me to clearly see the options that are available to me, how I can change my thinking, and actions and to not waste my time expecting others to change. It blows me away how easy it is for me to fall back into this old behavior that I know what is best for everyone else, how I can justify my actions by convincing myself that I am just trying to be helpful. Crazy, huh?"

"Man, I have got a long way to go," my friend sighed. "We all do," I replied. "We strive for spiritual perfection but learn to be satisfied with spiritual progress and I think you are doing pretty well. Think about it. You came to me for help. In our initial conversations you recognized that you had slipped back into, let's call it a state of discontentment as a result of resting on your laurels and not following the directions laid out in the book. More importantly, you didn't even know what those directions were. And so we started down the path of getting you back on track. I challenged you with committing to doing prayer and quiet time in the morning for starters and here we are almost two months later and it has now become a part of your regular morning routine. You didn't disappear, you got to work, that's a big deal, kudos to you, my friend."

"I think I am ready to dial it up a notch, what's next?" my friend said. "I agree," I replied. "Tell you what, how about if I make you a copy of those daily prayers and you can use them for the time being? You just pick one or two in the morning before you begin your readings and then down the road you can work on writing your own, similar to what I did." My friend nodded his head affirmatively. "Yeah, I can do that. You don't want me to get to work on writing my own prayers now?" "No, let's hold off on that for now, just use what I have. Let's get back to the directions, specifically that evening review, the ten questions that the book asks us to examine when we retire at night."

My friend winced. "I had a feeling that was coming. I am going to need another cup of coffee". I laughed and said, "Coming right up, Dunkin Donuts to the rescue!" **To Be Continued ... May 2023.**

## How It (Really) Works

### What Principles?

Rick R. – Miami, Florida

When I first heard the term "*practice these principles in all our affairs*", in Step Twelve, I was waiting for someone to hand me a list of the principles, but it never happened the way I thought it would. I then thought that *the Steps* were what they were referring to when they spoke of *these principles*, but that never settled into my satisfaction either. Someone once suggested that the Saint Francis Prayer, being in Step Eleven may be the principles they were pointing out in Step 12; Close, but no cigar. I've never heard a clear, definite answer to this personal dilemma, but it never stopped me from searching for a clear understanding of what "*these principles*" are. After hearing thousands of members sharing on hundreds of topics in Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) meetings for many years, and reading the Big Book, (Alcoholics Anonymous) and the 12&12, (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions) innumerable times, a slow but sure picture started to come in to focus. I realized that the 12 Steps were just the framework for a miraculous set of values that would set me free from all the doubts, fears, guilt, shame, and all the other negative emotions that cause all that mental chaos of Alcoholism.

Tradition Two in the 12&12, Bill talks about his dilemma when someone suggested he go professional with the A.A. recovery program and the group advised against it. The principle of ethics caused him to go against his natural instincts. The Golden Rule is a principle that could have been incorporated into the steps, and who could have argued with the virtue of that, if it weren't crossing the line that the Oxford Group had mistakenly crossed which may have been their undoing. Today I live by The Golden Rule even though I have never seen it suggested in A.A. literature.

The principles that we adopt in A.A. meetings are sprinkled throughout the Big Book and the 12&12, and there are far more than 12 of them. We assimilate them into our understanding sometimes without even being aware of it. On page 112 in the 12&12 for example, it asks "*Can we bring the same spirit of love and tolerance into our sometimes-deranged family lives that we bring to our A.A. group*"? This implies that love and tolerance is a principle or a mindset that we should practice in and outside the rooms of A.A. The program is made up of many principles that we learned long before we came into the program. Our problem was largely due to our inability to live by those principles. Our EGOs made the rules. Today, my Conscience outweighs my EGO. My unselfishness outweighs my greed. My compassion outweighs my resentments.... Today most everything I do is opposite to what it was Before A.A. and I have learned to find a principle that applies to every shortcoming that had plagued me in the past and I have learned to live by them. It takes all the guess work out of my decision making. The common denominator in all these principles that I value today is that they are all unselfish in nature. They are also common in all meaningful philosophies of life, and not exclusive to A.A. I no longer need to create my own version of these principles they are opposite to all my negative principles of the past. A noted writer once said, "When a person lives by principles, 99 percent of their decisions are already made for them." Today, I live by the dictates of my Conscience. Take that Mr. EGO.

"Part of the magic of AA is that the Fellowship, like the loving God who presides over us all, never gives up hope for the suffering alcoholic."

West Palm Beach, Florida, September 1986, "The Kid Who Came In from the Cold," In Our Own Words



IN OUR OWN  
WORDS  
Stories of Young AAs in Recovery

“While I wouldn’t recommend that anyone become an alcoholic, I believe that sober alcoholics living the AA way of life have been blessed with a gift. It’s a gift that can’t be bought, that can’t be won in a lottery, that can’t be stolen, forged, or rented.”

Edenvale, Gauteng, South Africa, October 1996, “A Healthy Appetite for Beer,” The Best of the Grapevine, Volume 3



## AA Volunteer Opportunities



*Naples Area  
Intergroup*

**Mornings: 9:00 to 12:30**

**Afternoon: 12:30 to 4:00**

**(One morning or afternoon each week.)**

**and, Telephone Helpline**

**After-hours, various days.**

**1-year continuous sobriety.**

**For information: 239/262-6535**

“I inched a little bit closer to AA and a little bit closer to myself ... I was suddenly a part of things, no longer just a shadow figure pulled toward the edge by the centrifugal force of my own fears.”

New York, New York, April 2004, “Centrifugal Force,” Beginners’ Book



## BEGINNERS’ BOOK

Getting and Staying Sober in AA

**“How do I know when I’m doing God’s will? I don’t ... but, I KNOW when I’m not.**

**AA GRAPEVINE, February 2003**

**Calling all AA  
Authors !!!**

**Please submit  
an article to**

**The COURIER !!!**

**Email article to:**

**[naplesintergroup@yahoo.com](mailto:naplesintergroup@yahoo.com)**



**Your Groups’**

**Activities**

**Can Be Here**

**Next Month.**

**To Highlight**

**Your Group,**

**Please Call Us:**

**Intergroup Office**

**239/262-6535**

## The Fourth Step Inventory Process

### I Got it Right the Second Time

Rick R., Miami, Florida

My first attempt at doing a fourth step inventory came as I was approaching my first year of sobriety. I now realize that I was rushing into it before I understood what the objective was and after scribbling down a great number of superficial deeds that I had done during my drinking days, my project was abruptly interrupted by a flight to Asia and a four-month vacation aboard a Navy tanker in the Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club, (being in the Navy at the time.)

I didn't have the opportunity to get to a single meeting during that time, but I did have a lot of quiet nights at sea where I contemplated my life before Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), and what I was going to do with the rest of my life. It was during that time that I decided, By God; I wasn't going to mess this thing up. I was going to do it by the book. I longed to be back in the safety of that very loving group that I left four months earlier. I knew that with their love and support I could get it right. I realized, as I was studying steps six it says, "We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character" and in step seven, it says "Humbly ask him to remove our shortcomings". To me that means, in Step Four, I should be trying to identify my defects of character and my Shortcomings.

The example of this step in the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) shows a chart which describes, what we did, why we did it, (fear of something) and who we did it to. It occurred to me that if I could identify the root cause of my problems (defects/fears) that I could change the behavior that resulted from those actions (shortcomings). To explain this in simple terms, I produced this scenario that anyone could understand, and it goes like this. I purchased a large S.U.V. off the showroom floor, drove away and, at the first signal light, I hit the brakes and it didn't stop till I was out into the cross traffic. I drove back to the dealer and explained what happened. They checked it out and discovered that they had put the wrong brake shoes on it by mistake. They replaced them with the correct brakes, and when I came to the signal light the S.U.V. stopped. And, it stopped at all the other stop lights as well. The defect (root cause) was that the brakes were the wrong size. The shortcoming (behavior) was that the vehicle did not stop properly. Once the defect was corrected, the shortcoming went away. For example, I was talking to one of my mentors, at that time, about criticizing other people and he said that the criticism of others stems from my own, low self-esteem (defect). It occurred to me that, with a little self-restraint, I could slowly refrain from that behavior. Once I identify my defects of character, it seems to take all the power out of them. For instance, if I could find any value in criticizing another person, I might still be doing it but there is no value in it except to feed my ego and it shows weakness of character (Low self-esteem).

**OBSERVATION: I used that template on all the behaviors that I'm not proud of; and, I feel stronger for it. That four months at sea gave me the motivation to re-visit the FOURTH STEP, and get it right the second time around. I highly recommend revisiting that step if you feel troubled by old behaviors. It did wonders for me !!**



## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OPEN AND CLOSED A.A. MEETINGS?

### Closed Meeting

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

### Open Meeting

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

### Lead and Discussion Meetings

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

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

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

**“When I begin to worry about things I can do nothing about, I tell myself to accept what you can't change. Often I've used the ideas in the Serenity Prayer as a trigger for relinquishing my need to control and as a reminder to take action when some discontentment can be remedied.”**

**El Granada, California, March 1989, “A Program of Action,” The**



### THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Bill W.'s  
Grapevine Writings

## *Dr. Samuel Moor Shoemaker: The Very, Very Beginning*

Some of you may know the history about the relationship between co-founder of \*Alcoholics Anonymous, Bill Wilson and Sam Shoemaker. For those who don't here's a brief account.

**Dr. Samuel Moor Shoemaker** was an Episcopalian priest, the rector at Calvary Episcopal Church in New York City. He was also a leader in the American Oxford Group. The Oxford Group is where the founding members of AA would meet before there was even an official group called Alcoholics Anonymous. AA adopted the 12 steps from the Oxford groups 6 tenets. Bill Wilson just took the loopholes out of the 6 tenets and when he was done writing them out, they turned into the 12 steps as we know them today.

There was a bowery style rescue mission attached to Calvary Church called Calvary mission. Ebby Thatcher (the man that 12 stepped Bill W.) was staying at Calvary mission when he made the call to Bill in November, 1934.



It was at the Oxford Group meetings held at Calvary Church that Bill met Sam Shoemaker. Sam became one of Bill's early spiritual mentors and Bill credits Sam with teaching him the principles (6 tenets) that became the Twelve Steps as we know them today. In 1937, whether Bill Wilson and "his drunks" quit Calvary Church Rescue Mission to meet somewhere else, or were thrown out remains uncertain, but Shoemaker was upset and did not speak to Wilson again until after he detached from Buchman's Oxford group, in 1942. "He later wrote a letter of apology to Bill stating that he and other Oxford Group members were wrong to oppose Bill's desire to work solely with alcoholics and to focus only on helping these individuals to stop drinking." Dr. Shoemaker had helped early A.A. in fundamental ways. Physically, he provided refuge for alcoholics in New York through Calvary Mission Rescue Mission. Of greater importance was his spiritual aid, which directly influenced the Twelve Steps and the nature of A.A.'s program of recovery.

Bill Wilson credited Sam Shoemaker as a key source of the ideas underpinning Alcoholics Anonymous:

It was from Sam Shoemaker that we absorbed most of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, steps that express the heart of AA's way of life. Dr. Silkworth gave us the needed knowledge of our illness, but Sam Shoemaker had given us the concrete knowledge of what we could do about it. He passed on the spiritual keys by which we were liberated. The early AA got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Group and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else.

Although Bill Wilson later said in an address about Shoemaker at the St Louis AA convention in 1955 alongside Father Ed.

It is through Sam, that most of our principles have come. That is he has been the connecting link for them. It is what Ebby learned from Sam and what Ebby told me that makes up the linkage between Sam, the man of religion, and ourselves. How well I remember that first day I caught sight of Sam. It was a Sunday service in his church. I was still rather gun-shy and diffident about churches. I can still see him standing there before the lectern. And Sam's utter honesty, his tremendous forthrightness, his almost terrible sincerity struck me deep. I shall never forget it.

## I Stand By The Door ( published Christmas 1958 )

Samuel Moor Shoemaker III DD, STD (December 27, 1893 – October 31, 1963)

I stand by the door.  
I neither go too far in, nor stay too far out.  
The door is the most important door in the world-  
It is the door through which men walk when they find God.  
There's no use my going way inside, and staying there,  
When so many are still outside and they, as much as I,  
Crave to know where the door is.  
And all that so many ever find  
Is only a wall where a door ought to be.  
They creep along the wall like blind men,  
With outstretched, groping hands.  
Feeling for a door, knowing there must be a door,  
Yet they never find it...  
So I stand by the door.  
The most tremendous thing in the world  
Is for men to find that door-the door to God.  
The most important thing any man can do  
Is to take hold of one of those blind, groping hands,  
And put it on the latch-the latch that only clicks and And opens  
to that man's own touch.  
Men die outside that door, as starving beggars die  
On cold nights in cruel cities in the dead of winter-  
Die for want of what is within their grasp.  
They live on the other side of it ... live because they have not found it.  
Nothing else matters compared to helping them find it, and open it,  
and walk in, and find Him.  
So I stand by the door.  
Go in, great saints, go all the way in-  
Go way down into the cavernous cellars,  
And way up into the spacious attics-  
It is a vast roomy house, this house that God is.  
Go into the deepest of hidden casements,  
Of withdrawal, of silence, of sainthood.  
Some must inhabit those inner rooms,  
And know the depths and heights of God,  
And call outside to the rest of us how wonderful it is.  
Sometimes I take a deeper look in,  
Sometimes venture in a little further;  
But my place seems closer to the opening...  
So I stand by the door.

Continued on page 12.

## I Stand By The Door ... continued from page 11.

There is another reason why I stand there.  
Some get part way in and become afraid  
Lest God and the zeal of His house devour them;  
For God is so very great and asks of all of us,  
And these people feel a cosmic claustrophobia,  
And want to get out. "Let me out!" they cry.  
And the people way inside only terrify them more.  
Somebody must be watching for the frightened  
Who seek to sneak out just where they came in,  
To tell them how much better it is inside.  
The people too far in do not see how near these are  
To leaving-preoccupied with the wonder of it all.  
Somebody must watch for those who have entered the door,  
But would like to run away. So for them too,  
I stand by the door.  
I admire the people who go way in.  
But I wish they wouldn't forget how it was  
Before they got in. Then they would be able to help  
The people who have not yet found the door,  
Or the people who want to run away again from God.  
You can go in too far and stay in too long,  
And forget the people outside the door.  
As for me, I shall take my old accustomed place,  
Near enough to God and hear Him, and know He is there,  
But not so far from men as to not hear them.  
And remember they are there too.  
Where? Outside the door-  
Thousands of them, millions of them.  
But-more important for me-  
One of them, two of them, ten of them,  
Whose hands I am intended to put on the latch.  
So I shall stand by the door and wait  
For those who seek it.  
"I had rather be a doorkeeper .....

"So I stand by the door.

( Published Christmas 1958, Calvary Church of Pittsburgh. )

**Announcing the NEXT SWFL  
Meeting Exchanges!! (AKA- "Booking meeting")**

Saturdays- 5/6; 8/5; 11/4, 2023 All @ 7:00 – 9:00am

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

9801 Bonita Beach Rd SE, Bonita Springs

ALL GROUPS MAY PARTICIPATE!

THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT FOR HOW MANY EXCHANGES A GROUP MAKES...

JUST AS LONG AS THERE IS AN EXCHANGE.

*"Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety."*

- Carrying the message to groups we would not normally attend and having them do the same.
- Help groups who may be struggling for attendees and members.
- Expand our connections in our recovery with other meetings in a post-pandemic world.
- Bring newcomers and other recovering alcoholics to more meetings outside their group. (*ahem\**, sponsors take note...)
- Experience the "meeting before the meeting and a meeting after the meeting."
- Other meeting types, such as big book, step, discussion, beginner leads, or others, may also be exchanged for speaking commitments as some groups do not have speaker meetings.
- Expand our sober support and social networks.
- Increased service opportunities for your group members.
- Intergroup and District Committees, plus Corrections; Institutions; PI/CPC; & Intergroup Offices, FCYPAA, Grapevine, and other AA-related service committees are invited to attend to get volunteers too!

***"To keep this, we have to give it away!"***

For more detailed information on how you and your groups can participate,  
email Tom B @ [tcb4457@gmail.com](mailto:tcb4457@gmail.com)

## Looking for Service Opportunities???

Help Make the "Sisters By The Sea" Conference Successful!

**~Committee Meeting each Thursday at 6:30 pm at the Naples Intergroup Office (located next to the 24 hour Club) April 6<sup>th</sup> thru June 15<sup>th</sup>~**

~ Memorabilia~ ~Registration~ ~Be a Greeter~ ~Entertainment~

Join a Committee

**Sisters By The Sea**

**June 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>**

**~ At the Hilton Naples ~**

Call Peggy P.E. at 239-269-7651

Or e-mail [SistersbytheSeaLLC@gmail.com](mailto:SistersbytheSeaLLC@gmail.com)

**Be a part of something wonderful**



**Fun! Fun!**

**Fun! Fun!**



# **Willough Visions**

**11103 Tamiami Trail East**

**Is Your Group Looking For A  
Service Opportunity ?**

**We are looking for group leaders to commit to cover  
1 meeting per week for 1 month commitments  
Providing (1 Chairperson and 2 Speakers)**

*This is your opportunity to carry the message that was so freely carried to you.*

**Wednesday Nights 7pm**

**Please contact Peggy P.E.  
(239)269-7651**

**Reserve A Spot for the Month of your Choice While Available**



A Memorial Day Weekend

It's in The Book!  
May 26 - 29, 2023



Seating Limited to 250 People!

*Friday-Monday!*  
WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Friday

7:00 p.m. Speaker: Marne D., Las Vegas  
8:15 p.m. "Bill's Own Story" (104 minutes)

Saturday

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Big Book Workshop  
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Banquet Dinner  
7:00 p.m. Speaker: Bob D., Las Vegas, NV  
8:15 p.m. "My Name is Bill W." (100 minutes)

Sunday

10:00 a.m. Big Book Workshop  
7:00 p.m. Speaker: Don L., Bellingham, WA  
8:15 p.m. "Bill W." (104 minutes)

Monday

10:00 a.m. "Dawn of Hope"  
11am Last Session

Saturday Night Banquet!

Conference Registration  
(Register online at [www.serenityclubswfl.org](http://www.serenityclubswfl.org))

\$45.00 Per Person

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

	Registration Per Person	\$45.00
<i>Optional</i>	Saturday Banquet Night (Chicken)	\$40.00
or	Saturday Banquet Night (Salmon)	\$40.00
	<i>[Only 150 banquet tickets available]</i>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	_____

Make Checks Payable To:  
and Mail To:

The Serenity Club  
12435 Collier Blvd., Ste. 107  
Naples, FL 34116

EMBASSY SUITES  
FT. MYERS-ESTERO

10450 Corkscrew Commons Dr, Estero, FL 33928

**239-949-4222**

Mention Group Code: **BBW**

Conference Rate Only \$159.<sup>00</sup>

Free Parking, Free Wi-Fi & Free Breakfast (hotel guests)





# 66TH FLORIDA STATE CONVENTION 2023

THURSDAY AUGUST 10 - SUNDAY AUGUST 13

[WWW.FLORIDASTATECONVENTION.COM](http://WWW.FLORIDASTATECONVENTION.COM)

SADDLEBROOK RESORT - WESLEY CHAPEL, FL 33543

[WWW.SADDLEBROOK.COM](http://WWW.SADDLEBROOK.COM)

## PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES



AA, Al-Anon, Alateen, Spanish Speaking, LGBTQIA, YPG, First Nations, Old Timer's Panel, Marathon Meetings, Workshops, and Archives Display; Friday and Saturday Banquets, Saturday BBQ lunch and Ice Cream Socials; Sports Activities include Golf, 5K Walk/Run, Pickle Ball, Morning Yoga, and Escorted Motorcycle Ride; Dances and Entertainment including South Florida's own "The A.A. Service Manual: The Musical", Saturday Pool Party, and much more...

**ASL interpretation at main conference's speaker meetings.**

### GUEST SPEAKERS

Marty J. - Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Aaron Z. - Molalla, OR

Larcine G. (Al-Anon) - Hawthorne, CA

Candice M. - Los Angeles, CA

Chris R. - Ingram, TX

Myers R. - Ingram, TX

Marion M. - Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Cathy C. - Tampa, FL

Jane D. L. - Tallahassee, FL

### HOST HOTEL INFORMATION

SADDLEBROOK RESORT  
A PREMIER MEETING, GOLF, AND TENNIS RESORT  
5700 SADDLEBROOK WAY WESLEY CHAPEL, FL 33543  
[WWW.SADDLEBROOK.COM](http://WWW.SADDLEBROOK.COM)  
800-729-8383

**CONVENTION CODE: 66FSC**

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS START ON AUGUST 3, 2022**

**HOTEL RESERVATION LINK: [HTTPS://BE.SYNXIS.COM/?HOTEL=39244&CHAIN=28394&CONFIG=INITIALCONFIG&THEME=INITIALTHEME&ARRIVE=2023-08-10&DEPART=2023-08-11&ADULT=1&CHILD=0&GROUP=FSC](https://be.synxis.com/?HOTEL=39244&CHAIN=28394&CONFIG=INITIALCONFIG&THEME=INITIALTHEME&ARRIVE=2023-08-10&DEPART=2023-08-11&ADULT=1&CHILD=0&GROUP=FSC)**

**RATES:**

- STANDARD ROOM - \$135**
- ONE BEDROOM SUITE - \$155**
- TWO BEDROOM SUITE - \$265**

RATES WILL BE HONORED 3 DAYS BEFORE AND 3 DAYS AFTER THE CONVENTION DATES BASED ON AVAILABILITY



**ALL ROOMS ARE SUBJECT TO STATE AND LOCAL TAXES**

**THIS HOTEL IS NON-SMOKING**  
**CHECK-IN 4 PM - CHECK-OUT 11 AM**



# JOIN THE GRAPEVINE BUNCH WE ARE NOT A GLUM LOT



Help Grapevine & Victor E increase involvement of AA's "Meeting in Print".  
**Service is our Legacy.**  
Grapevine Representatives Needed.  
Snowbirds WELCOME!  
At each meeting we read a story from the current Grapevine.

Grapevine Committee meetings are every other 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday @ 5:30 PM at the Intergroup Office next to the 24-hour Club on Pine Ridge Road. We hope to increase each AA members knowledge of Grapevine - **The International Journal of AA.** Be the first to have a Grapevine Representative in your Home Group!



<b>FINANCES</b>	<b>Mar23</b>	<b>YTD23</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>		
Literature/Merchandise	\$6,218	\$15,591
Group Contributions	4,362	9,243
AA Birthdays	-	-
Faithful Five	20	60
Individual/Anonymous	-	450
<b><u>Total Income</u></b>	<b>10,600</b>	<b>25,344</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>		
Bank/Credit Card Fees	140	352
Licenses/Permits	-	-
Office Supplies	623	1,212
Office Improve/Repair	-	-
www Hosting	-	-
Payroll	2,154	9,738
Payroll Tax	-	-
Postage	10	10
Printing	98	145
Purchases/Lit./Merch.	3,885	5,853
Insurance	-	-
Rent	1,000	2,000
Sales Tax	656	1,195
Telephone/www	245	683
Utilities	200	400
Computer Equipment	-	-
Computer Software	139	420
Computer/Maintain	-	-
Quarterlies / Travel		220
<b><u>Total Expenses</u></b>	<b>9,181</b>	<b>14,418</b>
<b><u>Net Ordinary Income</u></b>	<b>\$1,419</b>	<b>\$2,038</b>
Gratitude Dinner		
Other Expenses		
<b><u>NET OTHER INCOME</u></b>		
<b><u>NET INCOME</u></b>	<b>\$1,419</b>	<b>\$2,038</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**

James A. Farley Station  
P. O. Box 2407  
New York, N. Y. 10116  
(New Address) (30%)

#### **Area 15**

Don H.  
P.O. Box 311  
Safety Harbor, FL 34695  
(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*



# The Birthday Club

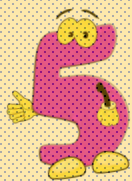
Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the AA Birthday Club? Sign up today and be featured in the *Courier*. Show your support for your Central Office. A donation of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety will help carry the message to alcoholics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



Paul B.	50 years
Ron P.	50 years
Ron L.	42 years
Don M.	43 years
Jim B.	39 years
Dennis F.	35 years
Rad W.	35 years
Jackie T. F.	36 years
Judy W.	34 years
Steve K.	28 years
Peter F.	27 years
Eileen D.	22 years
Bill S.	20 years
Ken H.	20 years
Laura T. F.	4 years
Tina S	2 years



# Faithful Fivers Needed



## 2023 Faithful Fiver Club

***April O., Bill S., James B., Jeanette H., Jim B., Jim H., Judy W., Kathryn Mc., Ken H., Ralph W., Ron L., Theresa R., Tim A.,***

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 for a one time Credit Card charge.

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

Your membership directly supports 12-Step work in District 20 and the 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:****Chair:**

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

**Alt. Chair:**

Joe S., 845/554-8721  
joeascaliala@icloud.com

**Registrar:**

Maria M., 370-2034  
mmetchear@aol.com

**Treasurer**

George A., 276-4024  
george.arminio1@gmail.com

**Secretary:**

Tom D., 206-6780  
tomadavision@yahoo.com

**Service Committees:****Archives****Service Opportunity**

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

**Current Practices**

Jerry E., 776-6767  
jerryedleman@gmail.com

**Grapevine/Literature**

Andrea C., 908/347-0494  
4chellana@gmail.com  
Business meeting the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Institutions**

Joe S. 845/554-8721  
joeascaliala@icloud.com  
1st Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Public Information/CPC****Service Opportunity**

Business meeting the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., 24 Hour Club

**Technology**

Dianna M., 248-6565  
diannamusse@gmail.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 encouraged.**

Submissions are edited for space and clarity only.

**District 20****Business Meeting:**

Fourth Thursday of the Month, 7:00 pm  
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.  
Maria M., 370-2034  
mmetchear@aol.com

**WILLOUGH**

Sunday, Monday and Thursday  
7:30pm  
George A., 276-4024  
george.arminio1@gmail.com

**HAZELDEN**

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

**BRIDGING THE GAP**

Maria M.  
370-2034  
mmetchear@aol.com

**NAPLES AREA INTERGROUP MEETING**

Central Office

1509-2 Pine Ridge Rd.  
(next to 24 Hour Club)

SECOND Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm

**Area 15; Panel 69**

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

**Delegate:** Cary W  
delegate@area15aa.org

**Alternate:** Lisa D.  
altdelegate@area15aa.org

**Chair:** Donna W.  
chair@area15aa.org

**Treasurer:** Karen V.  
PO Box 590835  
Ft Lauderdale, FL  
33359-0835  
treasurer@area15aa.org

**Registrar:** Robin P.  
registrar@area15aa.org

**Secretary:** Bronwyn F.  
secretary@area15aa.org

**Naples Area Intergroup****Trusted Servants****Chair:**

Robert C. 784-8514  
bcrowe616@aol.com

**Vice Chair:**

**Service Opportunity**

**Treasurer:**

Spence G., 207-7534  
spenceg123@gmail.com

**Secretary:**

Tiana B. 337/283-1208  
tsbrancato@gmail.com

**Members at Large:**

Tim A., 571-5440  
timallencmb@gmail.com  
**Service Opportunity**

**Office Manager:**

Ken Helton  
1509-2 Pine Ridge Road  
Naples, Florida 34109-2198  
naplesintergroup@yahoo.com  
Phone: 239-262-6535  
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**

Bill C., Bill D., Bill S., Bonnie B., Carrie W., Chrissie F., Eric S., Faye B., Gay S., Joe B., Nikki E., Rob O., Tina S.  
... and loyal substitutes.

**Service Opportunity****After-Hours Phone Volunteers**

Geoff E., Heather B., Ken H. Lauren F., Libby S., Nancy C., Steve K. and Tim A.

**Service Opportunity**