

T H E COURIER

Naples Area Intergroup
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The 12-step program of **Alcoholics Anonymous** (AA) is more than a method for achieving sobriety—it's a way of life that transforms despair into hope, isolation into connection, and self-destruction into purpose. For those of us who have been given a second chance through this program, it is vital not only to maintain our own recovery but to actively share the message with others who are still sick and suffering.

It's easy, once life gets better, to forget what brought us to A.A. in the first place. As we regain relationships, careers, and self-respect, the urgency that once drove us to meetings can fade. But the program's promise is clear: we are granted a daily reprieve from alcoholism, contingent upon the maintenance of our spiritual condition. That maintenance comes through continued 12-step work—especially Step Twelve, which calls us to carry the message to others.

Spreading the word of A.A. is not just an act of service—it is a responsibility. We were helped by people who came before us, and now it's our turn to be there for the next person walking through the door, broken and desperate. By sharing our experience, strength, and hope, we keep the program alive and ensure it's there for others, just as it was there for us.

The **12 steps** gave us our lives back. We must never forget that—and we must never stop reaching out to those still struggling. That is how we stay sober, and how we give this gift away.

The 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous is a proven path to recovery for those suffering from alcoholism. It offers not only freedom from active addiction but a complete transformation of mind, body, and spirit. For those of us who have found healing through the program, it is vital to remember where we came from, continue practicing the steps, and most importantly, share the message—not only with newcomers in the rooms of A.A. but with the wider public who may still be suffering in silence.

It's common for people in recovery to forget the program that saved them once their lives start improving. As the chaos fades and stability returns, so can complacency. But AA teaches us that sobriety is a daily reprieve, dependent on our spiritual condition. Continued step work, service, and connection with the fellowship are necessary to avoid slipping back into old patterns.

Equally important is carrying the message outward. There are countless individuals—friends, families, coworkers, and strangers—who may not know that a solution exists. Public outreach, done with respect for AA's principles and anonymity, helps **break stigma** and shines a light for those suffering in darkness. Letting the world know recovery is possible through AA may be the first step in someone else's journey to freedom.

We were saved by a message someone was willing to share. Now it is our turn to ensure that message reaches as far and wide as possible. In doing so, we keep ourselves—and others—sober. AA gave us our lives back. To stay sober, we must never forget that—and we must pass it on through service, sponsorship, and spreading the message wherever it's needed. *By: Anonymous, Cleveland Intergroup Office*

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.)





December 11, 1934, remains one of the important dates in AA history — the day Bill W. guzzled his last drink en route to Towns Hospital. But the events leading up to this fortunate event also provide important reflection.

On a “bleak day in November” (p. 8) Ebby T. carried his Oxford Group message of sobriety to Bill who was extremely impressed, but the gin and pineapple juice cocktail on the kitchen table won the day.

But, Ebby visited again which ignited his curiosity enough to produce a visit the Calvary Mission where Ebby was a resident. This was on Friday, December 7th. However, Bill drank on the way and began a drunken “testimony” from the podium.

Bill spent Saturday and Sunday, December 8th and 9th, in his bedroom tapering off. Amazingly Bill then, temporarily, lost all desire to drink, however, he came home roaring on Monday, December 10th.

This provoked an argument with his wife, Lois who angrily lamented: “You don’t even have the decency to die! You’re crazy! You’re crazy!” Upon which Bill picked up her small sewing machine and slammed it against the wall. Lois was, of course, terrified!

Bill rode the subways that night, panhandling funds for a bottle of booze. (Just imagine!) He came back home on Tuesday morning, December 11th and when he noticed the damaged wall caused by his drinking episode, he fell into deep remorse. Recalling Ebby’s success he left a note for Lois explaining he was off to Towns Hospital for yet another treatment (he had been treated there several times previously).

The train fare Brooklyn to south Manhattan was a nickel and, fortunately for us, Bill had six cents left. Then he espied a store where he still had credit and departed with four bottles of beer.

Bill arrived at Towns Hospital with a beer in one hand and two philosophy books in the other. He announced to his loyal physician, Dr. William Duncan Silkworth, that he had found an answer. This was Bill’s final treatment at Town’s Hospital. He never drank again!

Page 13 of the Big Book explains how, after Ebby’s visit, Bill ingested the basic ingredients of what now constitutes our Twelve Steps. This was December 13, 1934, seven days after his first trip to Calvary Mission. Bill, on that day, had a sudden and profound spiritual experience (p 14). If not for Bill’s final surrender to Step One during those seven days in December, AA would not be here today.

By Bob S.

January: The First (1st) Month Of Alcoholics Anonymous

STEP ONE: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable."

TRADITION ONE: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity."

CONCEPT ONE: "The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship."

1st Step Prayer: I admit that I am powerless over my addiction. I admit that my life is unmanageable when I try to control it. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my addiction.

TRADITIONS—CHECKLIST

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

1. Am I in my group a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?
2. Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into argument?
3. Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
4. Do I make competitive AA remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting AA in one place with AA another?
5. Do I put down some AA activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect of
6. Am I informed about AA as a whole? Do I support, in every way I can, AA as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?
7. Am I as considerate of AA members as I want them to be of me?
8. Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?
9. Do I go to enough AA meetings or read enough AA literature to really keep in touch?
10. Do I share with AA all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of fellowship?



It's Never Too Late To Learn

Do you want to get the most out of "your wonderful human machine" or are you one of those people who are satisfied with mere sobriety? To get the most we must learn to be very critical of how much happiness we are "buying" with our thinking.

Resentments are negative thoughts and you do not "buy" happiness with negative thoughts. Examine the resentments that you hold at the present time using our AA prayer as a yardstick: "Grant me Almighty God, the serenity to accept that which I cannot change; the courage to change that which I can and the wisdom to know the difference."

Most of us who have been in AA for any length of time realize that we of ourselves cannot change another man unless that man is first willing to be changed. Clashes between various personalities have at different times resulted in bitter resentments on both sides. Are these bitter resentments necessary?

Why is it that when some men have a resentment against another man or against another group that they want to "sell" the resentment to anybody who will listen? In our little AA prayer we ask Almighty God for the serenity to accept that which we cannot change. Can we change other personalities through bitter resentment? Are we living the 24-Hour Program when we harbor resentments for weeks at a time? Are we sincere when we ask our Higher Power for the serenity to accept that which we cannot change and then in the next breath spread BITTER RESENTMENT.

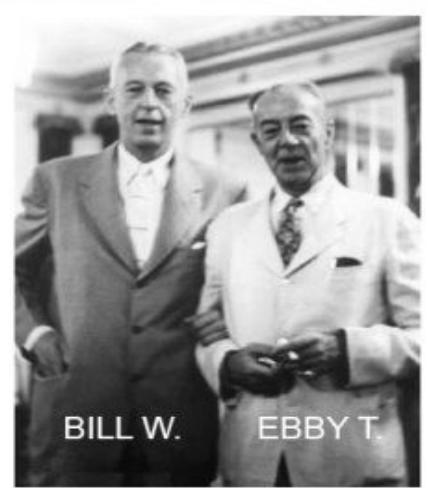
It is very possible that those of us who have been harboring resentments also have a different conception of our AA prayer than that which has just been stated. What of it? It's never too late to learn. Every day is New Year's Day! If placing "personalities" in that same category with other things which cannot be changed will help us to overcome our resentments then it is certainly worth a try. Think it over seriously. Don't be one of those people who are always ready to say "It can't be done."

Why is it that sometimes we do not realize that there are no perfect people? If we would but accept other people's ideas in that light we would not be so apt to declare war on some other individual or group of individuals who wanted to try a different approach to some problem than we did.

Why is it that we will defend some of our own silly ideas long after we know that the other man has a better approach to the problem? Humility is a very necessary ingredient if we want our thinking to "buy" the most happiness. Do we have humility? If you have resentments and especially if you have been trying to "sell" them to others it might be well to re-check the quality of your HUMILITY.

When dealing with other people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion, creatures bristling with prejudices and motivated by pride and vanity. And if you want to stir up a resentment tomorrow that may rankle across the years to come, just indulge in a little stinging criticism – no matter how certain you are it is justified.

Ebby's Neat Little Formula



A few days after Bill Wilson entered Towns Hospital (December 11, 1934) he was visited by his sponsor-to-be, Ebby Thacher. Ebby reiterated his "neat little formula," which was initially discussed at the "kitchen table" meeting several weeks previous at 182 Clinton Street. Though agnostic, Bill was completely deflated and willing to try anything that would release him from the powerful grip of alcoholism—his physician, Dr. Silkworth, had diagnosed him to die or become insane within a year.

The Ebby's neat little formula is ingrained in our Twelve Step program of action today. It was: Admit you are licked (Step One); Get honest with yourself (Step Four), Talk it out with somebody else (Step Five); Make restitution to the people you have harmed (Steps Eight and Nine); Try to give of yourself without stint, with no demand for reward (Step Twelve); Pray to whatever God you think there is, even as an experiment (Step Eleven).* Bill actually put these ideas into action on page 13 of the Big Book, and, of course, there accordingly followed his well-known spiritual experience revealed on the next page.

But Bill, the ardent agnostic, still had doubts whether this amazing event was truly a spiritual experience—perhaps it was only an illusionary hallucination or perhaps the effect of medication. But as fate would have it, he was brought—just at that time—a book titled, "Varieties of Religious Experience," by William James, who was the father of modern psychology, no less. His immediate identification with the persons in this writing gave him confidence that Ebby's neat little formula was indeed in manifest! He came to believe that his experience was indeed spiritual!

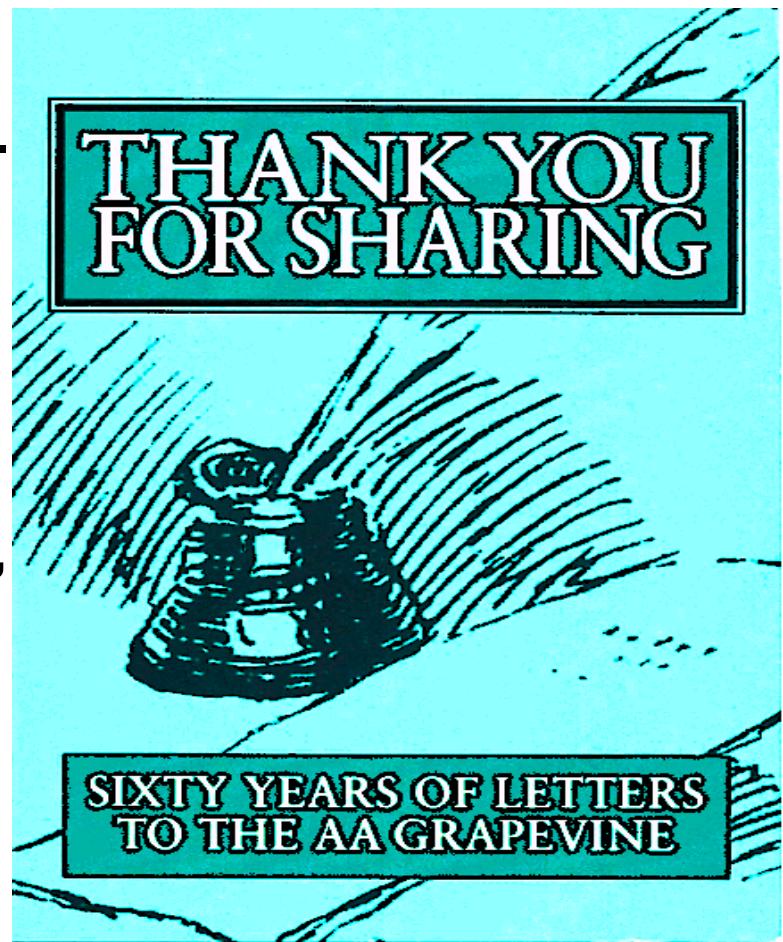
Bill believed! But why should we believe? Bill had an overwhelming desire regain his once highly respected status on Wall Street, but upon release from Town's Hospital, December 18th, 1934, he headed for the Calvary Mission instead. His new modus operandi was of a single purpose: to help other alcoholics recover—Wall Street was placed on the back burner! He brought a derelict from Calvary Mission to his elegant home, fed him, prayed with him, explained Ebby's neat little formula to him, but the poor sot got drunk, as did the next and the next and many to follow through the next four months, but Bill never gave up! He was an unstoppable steam roller!

Whatever his motive, it cannot be argued but what he had experienced a personality change. What does that prove? Please read the first paragraph of Appendix II, which speaks of: ". . . a personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism." Bill Wilson never drank again! Ebby's neat little formula worked!

* AA Comes of Age (p 62-63).

“AA is not a place; it’s an attitude of mind, a warmth of the heart – a spiritual fourth dimension where material things can’t get the upper hand.”

“A New Truth,” Los Angeles, California, May 1966, Thank You for Sharing: Sixty Years of Letters to the AA Grapevine



IN OUR OWN WORDS

Stories of Young AAs in Recovery

“The foundation stone of freedom from fear is that of faith: a faith that, despite all worldly appearances to the contrary, causes me to believe that I live in a universe that makes sense.”

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., January 1962, “This Matter of Fear”, Best of Bill



PARISIAN COCKTAIL BAR

ON THE LOBBY FLOOR OF THE MAYFLOWER HOTEL.

A Delighful Place for a Sip - a Chat - a Smoke

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Delightful Music

in AKRON - it's the
Mayflower Hotel

May 11, 1935, found Bill Wilson feverously pacing the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel remorsefully reflecting on the failed aforementioned enterprise. Had he been successful, he would have been set on his feet financially which, at the time, seemed vitally important. Bitterly discouraged, he found himself in a strange place, discredited and almost broke. Still physically weak, and sober but five months, he saw that his predicament was dangerous. He wanted so much to talk with someone, but whom?

At the end of the room stood a glass covered directory of local churches. Down the lobby a door opened into an attractive bar. He could see the gay crowd inside. In there he would find companionship and release. Unless he took some drinks, he might not have the courage to scrape an acquaintance and would have a lonely weekend.

Of course he couldn't drink, but why not sit hopefully at a table, a bottle of ginger ale before him? After all, had he not been sober five months now? Perhaps he could handle, say, three drinks—no more! Fear gripped him. He was on thin ice! Again it was the old, insidious insanity—that first drink.

With a shiver, he turned away and walked down the lobby to the church directory. Music and gay chatter still floated to him from the bar. But what about his responsibilities — his family and the men who would die because they would not know how to get well, ah—yes, those other alcoholics? There must be many such in this town. He would phone a clergyman.

His sanity returned and he thanked God. Selecting the name of Reverend Walter F. Tunks from the church directory, he invested a nickel to make one of the most important calls in AA history (Lois Wilson thought the reason for picking the name of Tunks may have been that one of Bill's favorite expressions was, "taking a tunk," which refers to a short walk.).

Excerpt from Pre-AA History (AA Cleveland)

Step One: The A. A. Launch Pad

She Didn't Find It Too Comforting.

I was sitting at a meeting recently when I heard a very young, and very sincere, single mother of two, sharing that her first experience in A.A. was the thought of having to do all this stuff for the rest of her life and she didn't find it too comforting. It sounded to me that, from her perspective, she knew that she had to do it, but it wasn't going to be easy or fun.



I admired her for her courage and conviction and I tried to encourage her by explaining things that I had experienced when I was faced with the life changing challenges of sobriety. I was the father of a boy, I was in the Navy at the time, and was divorced. It was a difficult time but I had to go through it, drinking or not.

I began the process of recovery in a slow, methodical and thorough way, and I came out a stronger person for it. I likened it to the first Apollo space mission to the moon. It goes something like this: When you first see the size of this space craft and consider the amount of energy it would take to put it into space, it is hard to fathom. After the countdown is complete, the engines fire and a tremendous amount of flame and smoke engulf the entire area, and in a few moments, it slowly starts to lift off. As it lumbers its first few hundred feet, it is expending a tremendous amount of fuel.

Slowly it starts to gain momentum and pick up speed, still shuddering along. Soon the booster tanks are depleted and they are ejected and the main tanks begin to propel it further along the flight path with even more thrust as it is reaching for orbit. Next, the main tank is depleted just before orbit and is ejected. What is left is a very small portion of what left the launch pad. Soon the craft leaves orbit and heads toward the moon and something else happens that sometimes goes unnoticed.

Somewhere between the earth and the moon, the gravitational pull of the moon has more influence on the craft than the earth's has, and it is gently drawn along its path. Very little energy is needed at this point except for minor course corrections. In A.A; when we first get started, it appears to be an insurmountable task and it requires a tremendous amount of effort just to get off the launch pad. Not every launch is successful and some of us don't make it the first time, and we have to exert all that energy in each successive attempt.

As we do get on our way, it starts to get easier as we increase our momentum. Much of the burden falls away as we make progress, and the going gets easier as we head for our objective. When we go through the twelve steps, we finally reach orbit. After we are satisfied that everything is in order, we can now set out for the moon. If we stay on course, the spiritual gravity of values we have adopted in the A.A. program will far outweigh the negative gravity of the past as long as we eject all of the dead weight that held us down.

As we continue to adjust the day to day, mistakes that we make, and adopt an unselfish approach to life, somewhere along the flight path, we will cross that line where we are drawn towards a life of peace and serenity that is hard to imagine when we are setting on the launch pad. The most important part of the journey is the lift off. If we can get through that most difficult time, it does get easier, and then we need only to stay the course.

By Rick R., San Diego, California

“The group I joined saved my life ... For an hour, I was safe. For an hour, I had a haven among those whose fear had once been as great as my own. I did not give my fear away – they took it. They eased it from my grasp with hugs and laughter, with shared experience.”

“The Scariest Thing,” Carlsbad, California, June 2006, Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier



EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY

The Next Frontier

“I was told when I began my own journey through the Twelve Steps that I could find God in a most unlikely place: standing smack in the middle of the truth about myself.”

“Another human being,” Oceanside, NY, May 2012, AA Grapevine

Dear Central Office: AA and the Law



CDO received a call from a Secretary of a meeting stating that a police officer came into their meeting looking for a suspect. He wasn't sure how to handle this. The following are a few excerpts from an article in Box 4-5-9 entitled "A.A. and the Law" that might inform a group conscience as to how to handle such a situation.

"Alcoholics Anonymous is a microcosm of the larger society within which it exists. As such, problems often found in the outside world can also make their way into the rooms of A.A. We are not immune to the difficulties that plague the rest of humanity, and when questions of the law and its application do occasionally arrive at our doorstep, there are not always easy or simple answers...

...Legal matters, as seen through the eyes of A.A. members, can be especially disconcerting and, over the years, some A.A.s have turned to G.S.O. to help them negotiate complicated circumstances that put groups and individuals in a difficult position. A member sharing in a Fifth Step, for example, divulges the details of' a crime that has gone unsolved. An alcoholic speaks from the floor at a meeting about difficulties at home, perhaps involving spousal or child abuse. Local police arrive at a meeting looking for an individual who has violated parole....

...As stated in the essay on Step Twelve in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions about alcoholics, 'We are problem people who have found a way up and out.' With desperate pasts and difficult futures, many current and prospective members have found themselves on the wrong side of' the law; yet A.A. as a whole has no opinion on legal matters, has no authority—legal or otherwise—to control or direct the behavior of A.A. members and groups.

While we share in a spirit of' trust, both at meetings and individually with sponsors and friends, A.A. members are subject to the same laws as every other person. Our communications are not privileged in the legal sense nor do we have any special protective status under local, state, or federal statutes. A.A. membership does not grant immunity from local laws and being at an A.A. meeting does not put anyone beyond the jurisdiction of law enforcement officers. As has often been expressed throughout the Fellowship, as individuals, A.A. members are also 'citizens of the world,' and as citizens we are not above the law.

Carrying our message and abiding by our Traditions is, essentially, an internal affair—we can't expect others to be guided by them in the same way that we are. Yet, A.A. is not a world unto itself.

As those familiar with carrying the message into treatment or correctional facilities can attest, A.A. members doing such service are held to the standards those institutions expect; similarly, A.A. meetings and groups pay rent and must adhere to the conditions established by their landlords.

When it comes to A.A. and matters of the law, it is much the same. We exist within the society that surrounds us. Ultimately, the experience of how these situations are handled can be as varied as our Fellowship, but in most cases good judgment and common sense seem to provide the greatest guide.."



God as We Understand Him

Alcoholics Anonymous came into existence in 1935 at a time when much of our society was centered around the churches in the communities where we lived. Much of the South and the Midwest are still like that to this day.

As a child in my home town, on Sunday morning I could look out the window and see a great majority of my neighbors walking to church. That was the way it was in the early 1940's. The book, [Alcoholics Anonymous](#), was published in 1939 and seems that it was highly influenced by the many early members of the program at that time.

A.A. could have, very easily become a religious program. But, fortunately, the elders of that time realized, by the mistakes of the Oxford Group, and the Washingtonians, that they had to make it clear that, a desire to stop drinking was the only requirement for membership, and that the individual members could choose their own concept of a power greater than themselves, i.e. God as we understand him.

In Tradition Two it says, “*As He may express Himself in our group conscience*” When the word God is used in the remainder of the book, it is not always followed by the “*as we understand him*” qualifier, and I believe that many members get the idea that somehow, they are trying to push religion on them. I think that's understandable.

When I was faced with that possibility, I personally found it easy enough to read the black part of the pages in the book and to not let myself become distracted by what I now recognized as a cultural norm at the time. I had no problem setting aside my religious bias and recognizing the parts of the Big Book and the [12x12](#) that clearly state all of the options available when it comes to finding a “*power greater than myself*”, and I can name several right off top.

Alcohol itself was my higher power for a long time and still would be if hadn't gotten into the program.

My [EGO](#) ran my life for quite awhile until I got serious about life issues.

The A.A. program itself. I found myself spiritually lost when I surrendered and entered the program of Alcoholics Anomous and when faced with the need to come to terms with the Higher Power issue, I now realize why it took such a long time to settle this subject.

Years of drinking and an underdeveloped thinking process that was hard to get up to speed right away. As I got more familiar with the Big Book, and the 12x12, I started to uncover all the evidence that debunked the idea that I had to conform to any religious doctrine. In the 12x12 I read on page 26, “*Alcoholics Anonymous does not demand that you to believe anything.*” On belief, “*to acquire it, I had only to stop fighting and practice the rest of A.A.'s program as enthusiastically as I could.*” (p 27)

Also on page 26 where it states, “*Take it easy. The hoop you have to jump through is a lot wider than you think..... A one-time vice-president of the American atheist Society ... got through with room to spare*” Then on page 33 of the 12x12 it says “*Therefore, Step Two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this step.*”

Today I am very comfortable with my own concept of a Higher Power and I use the word God only to put a name on a concept that has no physical form and I might say that it expresses itself in the collective conscience of the world we live in. I can assure you that if you read these qualifiers and practice the rest of the principals of the program, as enthusiastically as you can, you will come to terms with a personal concept of a higher power as well as any of us.

“As faith grows, so does inner security.”

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., January 1962, “This Matter of Fear”, Best of Bill



THE BEST OF BILL

Reflections on Faith, Fear, Honesty, Humility, and Love

Plus Bill's Classic Essay on Anonymity



“We neither ran nor fought. But accept we did. And then we began to be free.”

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., March 1962, “What Is Acceptance?”, The Language of the Heart

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Bill W.'s
Grapevine Writings

The Unselfish Spirit



Let there be no misunderstanding that our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. The degree that the individual carries out these two goals is not mandated by the AA body and the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

The AA program offers suggestions on how to overcome the difficulties brought about by the disease of alcoholism and not simply the act of drinking. These difficulties come in the form of spiritual damage and material wreckage. It seems that our spiritual damage lies in the unseen part of our makeup such as, our thinking, our motive, our fears, our conscience, our ego, guilt, shame, self esteem, and like. Our material wreckage often comes as the result of our spiritual damage and is the residue of our spiritual condition.

The outside world cannot visually see the spiritual part of our makeup and can only judge us on the actions that we take and the wreckage brought about by those actions thus rendering the consequences of that judgment, such as, loss of jobs, jail, divorce, loss of family, etc. The solutions to these spiritual and material maladies start with understanding the cause and effect of our thoughts and actions. Our defects of character lie within our thoughts and our motives. Our shortcomings are the behavior and the actions that stem from those motives and thoughts.

Selfishness-self-centeredness! That, we think is the root of our trouble. (pg. 62 BB.) That, being said, isn't it apparent that selflessness, unselfishness would be the solution to our trouble? That seems to over simplify the solution but in my experience it is so simple that it is usually overlooked or dismissed.

Most alcoholics have spent their whole lives taking advantage of everything and everyone around them and as the result, have been plagued by the guilt and shame that only a drink could mask. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous suggests that we live by principles and I cannot find one selfish principle in the Big Book or the 12x12.

I believe that most of the people that truly have a desire to stop drinking and embrace the program of Alcoholics Anonymous start to change much of the behaviors that they recognize as counterproductive simply because they can hear these things that we all share at meetings and they change the most obvious shortcomings in their day to day activities.

This is a good start and with time it starts to erode much of the shameful habits of past that had become commonplace. Talk of inventories and amends cause us to think at a different level about those material matters. That is usually the only thing that we are aware of in the beginning.

When we talk about spiritual matters, it seems that we all have different perceptions of exactly what we mean by "spiritual". If, for the sake of simplicity, we think of it as our innermost self such as our ego, conscience, our mind, our heart or soul, if you like, and realize that this is where our spirit resides and where our emotions live, and that is also where the pain of our past thrives.

If we want to achieve the peace of mind that is promised in step nine, we will have to come to terms with the process of acceptance of the world as it is and of the people in that world. If we want to be accepted and forgiven for our past mistakes, we must be willing to accept all of the people that we find fault with and give them the same latitude that we are seeking.

To accomplish this we can stop being judgmental and replace that with an understanding spirit. We will have to replace gossip and character assassination with compassion and empathy. If we can't do that, then how can we expect the world around us to accept us and forgive us for our past mistakes? This is no time to rest on our laurels, so to speak. It's time to begin cleaning out the attic.

This is where we begin to free up that space in our minds that has been keeping us awake at night. This is truly the path to developing the unselfish spirit, and with it come a peace of mind that's hard to imagine while we were still playing God ourselves. It costs me nothing to be kind. My wish for those other people is that they can someday find the same peace of mind for themselves that this process has provided for me. What more can I say.

By Rick R., San Diego, California

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

Calling all AA

Authors !!!

Please submit

an article to

The COURIER !!!

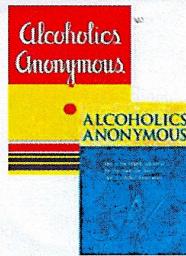
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**Your Groups'
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To Highlight
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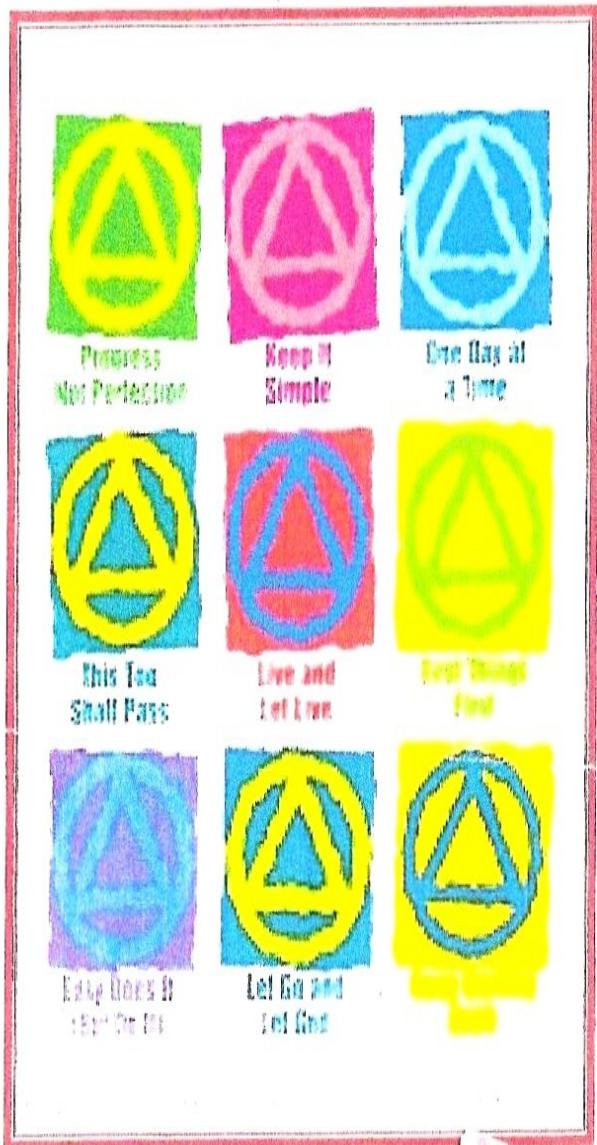


Deep Dive Big Book Study

Where	24 Hour Club 1509 Pine Ridge Rd Naples
When	8 am Saturdays
	Starting December 6 th to May 2nd
Who is it for?	Anyone interested in going on a 22-week deep study of the BIG BOOK of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS Sponsors, Sponsees, Newcomers, Old Timers, Friends
What do I need?	An open mind, A Big Book, A 12 Steps and 12 Traditions Pen, highlighter, notebook
We will have	Big Books, 12 Steps and 12 Traditions Pens, highlighters, notebooks if you don't.
What to expect?	Food, Fellowship, Laughter, deep discussion about the Big book, AA history, the common solution and we hope a new experience that will go with you in your daily living.
Questions	Call or email Paul B 763-464-9799 pbeckfeld@naplesretreat.org

Sponsored by Naples Retreat

Carry the Message Day!



**FOOD ~ FUN ~
FELLOWSHIP**

District 20

CARRY THE MESSAGE DAY

24 hr Club 1509 Pine Ridge Rd Naples, FL 34109

Sunday February 15, 2026

from 12:00- 5:00 P.M.

??? Lauren F. (239) (220-2792)

- Naples Intergroup
- Literature
- Archives
- Corrections, Institutions
- PI/CPC
- Grapevine /SKIT



**Special Training workshop 2-3pm
GSR's & DCM's**

Taco bar, water, desserts provided

BE A PART OF SOMETHING
WONDERFUL!

LOOKING FOR SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES?

**HELP MAKE THE
SISTERS BY THE SEA, 2026
CONFERENCE SUCCESSFUL!**

JOIN THE HERD AND HAVE SOME FUN!

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS ARE ON MONDAYS AT 5:30 PM AT
THE NAPLES INTERGROUP OFFICE IN PERSON OR ZOOM**

ZOOM ID: 2397844921 PW: 2026

Meeting Dates:

**January 26th; February 23rd; March 30th; April 13th;
April 27th; weekly in May; and June 1st.**

**The final conference meeting will be held on June 8th in
the Governors Suite at the Hilton Naples.**

❖ MEMORABILIA

❖ ENTERTAINMENT

❖ BE A GREETER

❖ REGISTRATION

SISTERS BY THE SEA JUNE 12,13,& 14TH

HILTON NAPLES

REGISTER AT WWW.SISTERSBYTHESEA.COM

QUESTIONS?

CALL PEGGY P.E. AT 239-269-7651

OR E-MAIL SISTERSBYTHESEALLC@GMAIL.COM

68th FLORIDA STATE CONVENTION



Scholarships Available!

ORLANDO, FL 
August 6TH-9TH, 2026

9700 International Drive Orlando, FL 32819

A NEW FREEDOM



SCAN HERE TO REGISTER

Fun Activities

- ✓ Indoor Go-Karts
- ✓ Games & Trivia
- ✓ World Class Golf
- ✓ Dance Parties
- ✓ Scenic 5K Run

Experience Freedom

- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Great Speakers
- ✓ Meet New Friends
- ✓ Marathon Meetings
- ✓ Panels

Register Today While Rooms Are Available!!!

Register Online at <https://68.FloridaStateConvention.com>

Scan the QR Code with your camera. For assistance please visit <https://68.FloridaStateConvention.com>



Overflow
 Hotel 1 – \$109
\$20 add. person
 Hyatt Place
 8741 International Dr.
 Orlando, FL 32819
 1-407-370-4720



Overflow
 Hotel 2 – \$159
 Rosen Centre
 9840 International Dr.
 Orlando, FL 32819
 1-407-996-9700



Call 1-407-996-9700
 to be put on a
 waiting list if
 available. - \$159
 9700 International Drive
 Orlando, FL 32819

Alcoholics
Anonymous®

www.aa.org

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10115 / Telephone: (212) 870-3400

Please direct all
communications to:
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Fax: (212) 870-3003

To: GSRs, DCMs, Trustees, Non-trustee Directors, Area Officers & Committee Chairs, Delegates, Appointed Committee Members, Intergroups and Central Offices, Group Contacts, GSO and Grapevine Employees

December 22, 2025

Dear A.A. Friends:

Warm greetings – we hope this letter finds you well.

We are writing to inform you of an upcoming literature price increase affecting our English, Spanish, and French books, booklets, pamphlets, and other literature items. At the December meeting of the A.A. World Services Board, the board approved a price increase of \$3 per item for books and a 15 percent increase for all other literature items, with standard rounding applied.

The new prices will go into effect on February 1, 2026.

For historical perspective, the last price increase occurred in April 2023, and the previous increase was in 2014. As with the 2023 increase, this decision is the result of prudent fiscal planning and the goal of long-range stability. Like organizations everywhere, Alcoholics Anonymous is impacted by current economic changes and challenges. One of the most significant challenges we continue to face, as we did in 2023, is the increasing costs associated with the sale of literature.

It is important to note that before the COVID-19 pandemic, the combined costs of production, materials, warehousing, and shipping—collectively referred to as the cost of goods sold—generally ranged between 31% and 34% of sales. Over the past several years, those costs have fluctuated between 42% and 56% of sales, resulting in an annual revenue loss exceeding \$1.8 million. We do not expect these costs to return to pre-pandemic levels. This impact is especially significant given that the General Service Office is supported through both voluntary contributions and revenue generated from literature sales.

We continue to diligently and carefully monitor and reduce expenses where possible, always mindful of the profound significance of each “nickel in the basket” sent to the General Service Board.

Updated pricing will be reflected in the online store when the increase goes into effect.

For this increase, the following guidelines will apply:

- **Books** are defined as any item whose item number begins with **B, SB, or FB**.
 - These items will receive a **\$3 per-item increase**, excluding B-0 (*Alcoholics Anonymous* Facsimile First Printing of the First Edition—recently reduced to a discounted \$2 USD List Price) and B-28 (*A.A. for the Older Alcoholic*).
- **B-0** will remain unchanged and is the only exception to the book price increase.
- **B-28** will receive a **15% price increase**.
- **All other literature items** will receive a **15% price increase**.
- **Literature sets** will reflect a **\$3 increase per book**.

We appreciate your understanding and continued support.

With gratitude for your service,



Ken T.
Chair, AAWS Board



Bob W.
General Manager, G.S.O.

FINANCES	Dec 25	YTD 25
Income		
Literature/Merchandise		
	\$4,196	\$50,232
Group Contributions	2,308	31,984
AA Birthdays		716
Faithful Five		575
Individual/Anonymous	1,342	8,956
Total Income	7,846	92,464
Expenses		
Bank/Credit Card Fees	115	1,486
Licenses/Permits	-	200
Office Supplies	742	4,426
Office Improve/Repair	-	441
www Hosting	-	510
Payroll	2,331	27,972
Payroll Tax	-	1,314
Postage	-	66
Printing	-	671
Purchases/Lit./Merch.	3,707	34,880
Insurance	-	722
Rent	500	6,000
Sales Tax	337	3,477
Telephone/www	276	2,759
Utilities	100	1,200
Computer Equipment	-	75
Computer Software	107	1,706
Computer/Maintain		
Accounting Services	155	3,360
Total Expenses	8,417	90,858
Net Ordinary Income	(\$571)	\$
Gratitude Dinner Tickets	-	9,840
Raffle Ticket Sales		1,271
Gratitude Expenses	-	7,219
NET OTHER INCOME	-	3,495
NET INCOME	(\$571)	\$5,101

Thank you to all who contribute 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-B Pine Ridge Road
Naples, FL 34109
(50%)

General Service Office

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

District 20

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

Area 15

Area 15 Treasurer
2950 W. Cypress Creek Rd.
Ste 333 #1097
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33309
New Address (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	Dec 25	YTD 25
Bonita 1th Step Prayer & Meditation	0.....	282
24 Hour Solutions	0.....	500
Beach Bums.....	0.....	950
Big Book Babes	0.....	30
Big Book Steppers— Bonita	61.....	341
Big Book Steppers- Naples.....	0.....	237
Bonita Banyon	0.....	415
Bonita Friday Joe & Chrlie	0.....	347
Bonita Happy Hour	0.....	496
Bonita Ladies Night	0.....	150
Bonita Morning Group	0.....	805
Bonita Saturday Nite.....	0.....	1,000
Bonita Springs 96395.....	0.....	300
Bonita Unity.....	0.....	50
Bonita Women's Step.....	0.....	150
Brown Bag Group.....	0.....	1,067
Cake Meeting	0.....	70
Common Solutions Naples.....	0.....	1,348
Daily Reflections ZOOM	150.....	529
Easy Does It	0.....	3,000
Early Risers.....	0.....	1,000
Flemsy Reed Group	0.....	258
Free 2 Be	0.....	750
Friday Nite Lights.....	0.....	200
Group #510367.....	140.....	289
Happy Healers	0.....	425
Jaywalkers.....	0.....	47
Keep It Simple.....	0.....	870
Living Sober Naples	30.....	100
Meeting In The Park	0.....	639
Men Of Naples	73.....	239
Monday Daily Reflections	26.....	73
Morning Reflections	107.....	291
Naples Group	0.....	400
Naples Men Big Book Study.....	0.....	52

Group/Meeting	Dec 25	YTD 25
Naples Nooners	1,100.....	3,950
Naples South.....	400.....	400
New Dawn.....	0.....	467
New Serenity.....	0.....	250
Nuts & Bolts	0.....	350
On Awakening.....	0.....	150
One Day At A Time	0.....	153
Park Shore Women.....	0.....	500
Primary Purpose Marco	0.....	6,583
Saturday Girlfriends.....	0.....	150
Tables of Naples.....	100.....	100
Three Legacies.....	0.....	354
Thursday Women's Meeting.....	500.....	500
Veranda Group	23.....	68
Where Are We	0.....	300

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 Naples Area Intergroup.



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.

Rick G.	55 years
Paul B.	51 years
Ron P.	51 years
Ron L.	47 years
Jackie G.	39 years
Bill D.	38 years
Merle B.	37 years
Michael L.	36 years
Dennis F.	35 years
Rad W.	35 years
Judy W.	34 years
Steve K.	32 years
Bill S.	23 years
Ken H.	23 years
Laura .	7 years
Eric S.	6 years



Faithful Fivers Needed



2025 Monthly Faithful Fiver Club

April O., Bill D., Bill S., Eric S., Jeanette H., Jim H., Judy W., Kathryn Mc., Ken H., Ralph W., Rick G., Ron L., Theresa R.

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.

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:

Joe S. 845/554-8721
joeascalia@icloud.com

Alt. Chair:

Tom D. 845/23-6780
tomadavison@yahoo.com

Registrar:

Katie B. 708/408-9330
kaboyle56@gmail.com

Treasurer

Bob A., 440/667-4372
rsadams00@gmail.com

Secretary:

Maury D. 239/370-7232
maury@mдаiley.com

Service Committees:

Archives

Heather O. 272-2632
district20archives@gmail.com

District 20 Business Meeting

4th Thursday of each month,
7:00pm New Attitudes Club
4133 Tamiami Trail E.

Current Practices

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

Grapevine / Literature

Lauren F. 220-2792
laurenfrosh@comcast.net
Jody L. 518/335-9748
jojopr1025@gmail.com
Business meeting the third
Tuesday of each month at
5:30 p.m., 24 Hour Club

Institutions

Maria M.
mmetche@icloud.com
1st Thursday of each month
at 7:00 p.m., 24 Hour Club

Public Information/CPC

Ronnie P., 269-8251

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

Technology Opportunity.

Commitments

DAVID LAWRENCE CENTER

Every day except
Wednesday
7:00 p.m.

Maria M., 370-2034
mmetche@icloud.com

WILLOUGH

Sunday, Monday and
Thursday
7:00pm

Peggy E., 269-7651
marco-
angel2000@gmail.com

HAZELDEN

Monday, 7:00pm
Nick Geer 818/424-5463
nicgeer@gmail.com

BRIDGING THE GAP

Joe S., 845/554-8721
joeascalia@icloud.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 75

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

Delegate: Lisa D.
delegate@area15aa.org

Alternate: Donna W.
altdelegate@area15aa.org

Chair: Bron F.
chair@area15aa.org

Treasurer: Alan T.
treasurer@area15aa.org

Registrar: Lea A.
registrar@area15aa.org

Secretary: Paul M.
secretary@area15aa.org

Naples Area Intergroup

Trusted Servants

Chair:

Blake B., 285-7174
blake91511@gmail.com

Vice Chair:

Robert C. 784-8514
bcrowe616@aol.com

Treasurer:

Dalton M.
781/444-7070
daltonmurfee@aol.com

Secretary:

Jasmine C., 220-7798
jasmineyeater@yahoo.com

Members at Large:

Service Opportunities

Office Manager:

Ken Helton

1509-B Pine Ridge Road
Naples, Florida 34109-2198
naplesintergroup@yahoo.com

Phone: 239-262-6535

239/963-7820

www.ganaples.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

Amy D., Annamarie T., Becky S., Bill S., Bonnie B., Caroline H., Eric S., Gay S., Geoff S., Lara E., Natacha A., Peggy E., Ralph B., Swen L., ... and loyal substitutes.

Service Opportunity

After-Hours Phone Volunteers

Bob M., Craig P., Geoff E., Heather B., Ken H., Lauren F., Steve K., and Tim A.