



The Message

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

TRUSTED SERVANTS

INTERGROUP 5, INC JULY 2008 TALLAHASSEE, FL

Intergroup

Chairman—Craig F—Living Sober
Co-chairman—Mike F—New Hope
Secretary—Carol H—New Hope
Treasurer—Matt—Lake Jackson
Literature—Greg S—Home
Website—Andy E—Men's Faith
Activities—Laura A—Central
Membership—Adam G—Central
Newsletter—Sandy M & Julie W—
Mustard Seed
12 Step--Jeff D--Central

District 5

DCM—Joe D—Downtown
Alternate DCM—Susan E—Central
Secretary—Craig F.—Living Sober
Treasurer—Matt N—Central

Standing Committees

Public Info—AC—Happy Hour
CPC—Steve H—Central
Treatment—Kevin T—Happy Hour
Corrections—David G—End of the
Road
Grapevine—Vern D—Northside
Accessibilities—Janis T—Willing
Archives—Rebecca—Central
Bridging the Gap—Danny P—Central

"Being Convinced"

In October 2005, a little less than two hours after being discharged from a treatment center in my South Georgia hometown, I walked into a noon meeting at the Central Group on 909 Gadsden Street. The person who brought me to that noon meeting is also a member of the fellowship, a fact I did not know at the time. That person is also a trusted friend and co-worker. I was a bit curious at that time, why my co-worker, who had seen me in a dismal drunken condition, would extend himself to the point of making two 80 mile round trips on my behalf, interceding in a positive manner for me with the treatment staff while I was in treatment, and offering his help in other ways as well. During the trip from the treatment center my friend asked me, no less than three times, in the forty-five minute ride, "Was I ready to stop drinking?" Each time I answered yes; however still shaken and jittery from the binge and the treatment center experience, I must admit asking me the same question over and over again in such a short span of time disturbed me. However there was a deeper reason for my disturbed feeling - a reason I suppressed until I began working the program of recovery.

I truly did not want to mislead or lie to a person who had gone above and beyond human kindness to help a drunk like me. I sincerely wanted to stop drinking. However the complete truth, as I felt it and honestly believed in my heart at the time was, yes I do want to stop, however there is no way I can stop. I had tried, for years, using all kinds of methods to stop or at least moderate my drinking and all methods failed in time. I finally had conceded victory to the bottle. The fight with people and circumstances had worn me down. Conceding to the bottle, with all the irony and insanity in that concession, gave me a measure of relief. I can finally stop the masquerades. I can come clean, as I deemed it with the rest of the world. I can at last concur, without reservations and excuses, with the people in my life that I am addicted to alcohol. I can finally get relief from the stress of trying daily to function and appear normal, while desperately trying to maintain some sort of livelihood and afford to drink the way I needed. This energy could be better spent pursuing alcohol. I had accepted my fate and was bracing to ride it out to the bitter end. I was "totally convinced" that I could not live without drinking when I entered the rooms.

I was so spiritually bankrupt when I entered that noon meeting I could not image or feel the Grace of God working in my life. Upon entering the rooms of AA almost three years ago, I thought that this is just other treatment center, back to emptiness, and eventual return to the drinking cycle. I was all too familiar with this miserable, destructive, and void

cycle. However this ride from the treatment center was the beginning of a journey into a new way of life- a spiritual path that would connect me back to God. I had admitted to myself, not totally to my friend who was giving me the ride, that I was powerless over alcohol. His repeated questions distributed me because I felt there was nothing I could do about the truth in his words. What I found, after entering the rooms of AA, was my admission to powerlessness did not have to mean a submission to losing and giving in to a

CONTACT INFORMATION

Intergroup 5, Inc.
1106-H Thomasville Road
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 224-1818
Website: www.intergroup5.org
Newsletter: Send info to
message@intergroup5.org

District 5

P.O. Box 12352
Tallahassee, FL 32317-2352

NFACAA—Area 14

Area Treasurer
Marilyn B.
6035 Tudor St.
Inverness, FL 34452

Experience, Strength and Hope

Step Seven

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Let's get right to the point. How can God remove our shortcomings? Let's start with the prayer from the BB for taking step 7: "My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen."

We have now completed Step 7. Done!....you are wondering is that it?...are they gone?...What just happened? Well, looking just up the road in the 12 & 12 we can see how God will help us remove some of those troublesome bedevilements from us.

In Step 7 of the 12 & 12, the word "*humility*" is mentioned 27 times, indicating this is the desired principle to be sought after. We recognize that mere determination and self-will has not wielded enough power to remove the faults we struggle with. We now believe we need a power do something we cannot do on will-power alone. Our "lack" of humility has been a primary stumbling block in removing character defects. These defects can range from simply having been dishonest -- lying about problems to others -- or having held resentments against loved ones. Or these defects may involve much more serious offenses. In my opinion God has been helping us with the "humility" issue before we get to Step 7. We've already been practicing ego deflation and gaining humility in our lives along the way in these areas: *we made an admission to being powerless over alcohol, sanity restoration, asked God into our lives, took inventory, looked at ourselves and shared some hard truths about ourselves with another person.*

So now we are ready to continue this growth process into humility *to further our usefulness to God and our fellows.* We have allowed the power of "willingness" to work in us through the steps to this point in our recovery. We are now "willing" to allow God to help us even more. Our faith is stronger from the works we have done and the results are evident. The 12 & 12 says: "This improved perception of humility starts another revolutionary change in our outlook. Our eyes begin to open..." As we recognize the marvelous grace we have been given, we become even more willing to allow God to remove our shortcomings by the principles we practice. We continue to be free from the bondage of self to better do His will and experience this new found freedom in the life of sober living. We now understand humility as necessary and a guide in a life-long process of practicing the principles in all our affairs.

Merrell M.

Tradition Seven

Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Have you ever noticed that many recovered alcoholics will very often offer to help another alcoholic in any way that they can: money, clothes, rides to and from meetings, bus tickets, cigarettes, food, shelter, jobs? But when the basket goes around the room, those same recovered alcoholics don't seem to have "a dime to spare" to help the group be fully self-supporting. As a result, many groups have difficulty staying in "the black."

Now, I'm not saying that, as a whole, we're a bunch of tightwads, but I do think that many of us have forgotten that our groups need our financial support on a regular basis. As we are learning, due to the global economy, everything our groups need to stay "in the business" of providing rooms where the gift of sobriety can be given away to anyone who seeks it, prices are going up, up, up!!! So maybe we, all the recipients of the gift, could begin to dig a little deeper into our pockets to ensure that our groups can continue to function--- "declining outside contributions."

Carol H.- Lloyd New Hope Group

DID YOU KNOW?

Some of the rough edges found in the first edition stories (the use of profanity, for example, references to specific religious beliefs, and several rather disorganized stories) would be smoothed out in those chosen for later editions. When Bill W. began the revision, he laid out some general guidelines: "Since the audience for the book is likely to be newcomers, anything from the point of view of content or style that might offend or alienate those who are not familiar with the program should be carefully eliminated... Profanity, even when mild, rarely contributes as much as it detracts. It should be avoided."

***This passage comes from pages 2-3 of Experience, Strength & Hope, published by AA World Services, Inc. in 2003.

I know that the quote was made in reference to the compilation of the second edition of Alcoholics Anonymous, but, I wonder if this should not be true for meetings too?

Carol H. - Lloyd New Hope Group

(cont from page 1)

His repeated questions disturbed me because I felt there was nothing I could do about the truth in his words. What I found, after entering the rooms of AA, was that my admission to powerlessness did not have to mean a submission to losing and giving in to a life of drunken desolation. It was the admission to victory over a battle I had never won. God had his angels in place for me the first day I walked into Central Group. After leaving the treatment center, my feet did not touch the ground before entering the rooms of Alcoholic Anonymous. I went directly from that noon meeting and spent the better part of the next two hours signing up for an intensive out-patient treatment program with only a two-hour break before attending my first session in outpatient treatment. My Higher Power in His Wonderful Grace had stacked the deck in my favor. This time the cycle was broken. Denial lost its grips with hope, truth, and a sense of peace taking hold. I am very grateful for the program of Alcoholic Anonymous.

I am "totally convinced" that I am powerless over alcohol. If I continue to adhere to the 12 simple suggestions that summarize the program of AA, I am also "totally convinced" that I don't have to drink one day at a time.

Johnny F.

EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

INTERGROUP 5 NEWS

Web statistics: 4,621 pages sent from Intergroup 5 Website

Phone statistics: The following 35 calls were answered by volunteers at the Intergroup 5 office phones:

12step - 12, Al-Anon - 4, AA info - 3, Meeting info - 16, Misc. - 5

Summer Schedules have wreaked havoc on phone volunteers' time slots with vacations, summer school, camps etc., etc. Your local intergroup could use some more phone volunteers (no matter what your time schedule is - we've got a slot). If you have SIX MONTHS SOBRIETY and have the time/willingness to serve on the AA HotLine, we could sure use your help. Call the IG office 850.224.1818 or 850.545.3833 to volunteer. Thanks for those who continue to be there for the AA in need.

rob k.

CURRENT EVENTS

District 5 Meeting: Wednesday, July 16th, 2008

Area Assembly: July 11, 12, 13, 2008

Paramount Resort & Conference Center, 2900 SW 13th St. Gainesville, FL 32608. (352) 377-4000 or 877-992-9229

When making reservations, be sure to say you want a room in the "North Florida Area block."

52nd Florida State Convention: August 13-17, 2008

Harbor Beach Marriott
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Steps Extravaganza: Sunday, August 24, 2008, 2:00-5:00

Jackson Lodge (tentative) 2818 Apalachee Parkway

Steps 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 & 11 still available

Call: Janis - 980-1793 or Susan - 264-6962

Pizza, drinks and fellowship!

CORRECTIONS CORNER

Our next committee meeting is July 13, 3pm at 909 Gadsden St. If you are interested in service work related to correctional facilities, please come out and join us.

For those not interested in carrying meetings into the facilities, there are still other service opportunities available. AAs who are willing to serve as Pre-Release Contacts (similar to Bridging-the-Gap contacts), and those interested in Corrections Correspondence service work are encouraged to attend. If you can't make it, please email me at d5a14corrections@hotmail.com or call (850) 590-3087 for more info.

All individuals and groups who contribute to the Pink Can Literature Fund should make checks payable to: "Pink Can Fund Account". The money is used to buy conference-approved literature to carry to (and leave with) AA members in correctional facilities. Contributions can be mailed to the District 5 mailbox (see front page of the Message).

Happy A.A. June Anniversary!!!

Bradfordville Group: Jim C. - 1, Terry W. 7

Central Group: Robyn S.- 1, Tara - 1, Ben V. - 2, Cameron - 2, Susan B. - 2, Dora - 3, Keith G. - 3, Jenny T. - 4, Van J. - 13, Sabrina - 19, Judith - 21, Stanley P. - 23, Phil S. - 25, Chester - 32, Bob H. - 34

Conscious Contact, Happy Hour, Living Sober & Southside:

Carla Mc. - 1, Bennett - 11, Joe W. - 11, Carla H. - 13, Jr. O. - 14, Jack S. - 16, Paul P. - 21

Monticello Serenity Group: Keith G. 3, Cliff T. - 5, Judy A. - 13, Charlie C. - 33

Mustard Seed: Melanie - 18



July 1939 - Warren C. joined A.A. Cleveland, caused debate because he was not hospitalized.
July 2-3, 1955 - 20th Anniversary Convention at St. Louis, MO. The Three Legacies, of Recovery, Unity, and Service, turned over to the movement by the old timers. AA comes of Age.
July 2, 1960 - Father Ed Dowling dies.
July 2, 1965 - "Best of Bill" and Pocket-Sized "12 and 12" 1st sold.
July 3-5, 1970 - 35th Anniversary of AA in Miami. "Declaration of Unity". Bill's last public appearance.
July 3-6, 1980 - 45th Anniversary of AA in New Orleans. First true marathon meeting was held.
July 4-6, 1975 - 40th Anniversary of AA in Denver. Worlds largest coffee server serves 1/2 million cups a day.
July 5-8, 1990 - 55th AA Anniversary in Seattle, WA. Nell Wing given 10,000,000th Big Book.
July 7, 1940 - Bill attends 1st Summer Session at School of Alcohol Studies at Yale University.
July 11, 1960 - Time published article called "Passionately Anonymous" on the 25th Convention.
July 14, 1939 - Dr Tiebout gives Big Book to Marty M. who promptly throws it back at him.
July 15 1938 - 1st documented use of name Alcoholics Anonymous, A.A. archives letter Bill to Willard Richardson.
July 22, 1877 - Willian Duncan Silkworth born in Brooklyn, NY.
July 22, 1980 - Marty M. early AA woman and founder of NCADD dies.
July 23, 1940 - Philly AA's send 10% of kitty to Alcoholic Foundation, sets precedent.
July 28-30, 1950 - 1st AA Int'l Conv. held in Cleveland. 12 Traditions adopted. Dr. Bob's last appearance at large AA gathering.
July 31, 1972 - Rollie H dies sober in Washington DC.

Diz T.