



The Message

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

TRUSTED SERVANTS

INTERGROUP 5, INC AUGUST 2009 TALLAHASSEE, FL

Intergroup

Chairman—Craig F.—Living Sober
 Vice Chairman—Mike F.—New Hope
 Secretary—Christy T.—Happy Hour
 Treasurer—Carol H.—New Hope
 Literature—Vacant
 Website—Debbie C.—Open Door
 Activities—Tracy G.—Happy Hour
 Office Coordinator—Pete S.
 Membership—Vacant
 Newsletter—Sandy M & Emily B -Mustard Seed
 12 Step--Jeff D--Central

District 5

DCM—Holly H.—Bradfordville
 Alt. DCM—Donna W.—Happy Hour
 Secretary—Matt N.—Central
 Treasurer—Tracy I.—Bradfordville

Standing Committees

Public Info—Vacant
 CPC—Vacant
 Treatment/BTG—Kris C.—Central
 Corrections—David G.—Happy Hour
 Grapevine—Michael L.—Happy Hour
 Accessibilities—Vacant
 Archives—Vacant

CONTACT INFORMATION

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My story began the typical way. My parents were alcoholics. I grew up in a broken home until my parents divorced. When I was 12, I went to live with my dad. He worked hard and played hard. I thought that was the way it was supposed to be. Later on when I was on my own, I felt entitled to drink after a hard day's work. I paid my bills; I showed up for work, although I admit sometimes not in any shape for it. Still, I managed to function very well. My work was good and I had a couple of great bands going, playing gigs all the time. I didn't want the party to end. I was always the one who wanted more. I could drink most of my friends under the table and I thought these were the best years of my life. Alcohol was my ambrosia. Everything in my life included it.

I trudged on for years like this. Over time my group of friends pared down to a few hardcore buddies that drank like me. Eventually even they fell by the wayside, leaving only alcohol to comfort my fear and self pity. I began to isolate. All I wanted was to drink and be left alone. Holidays came and went without me. My personal appearance and household fell into shamble shambles. I recall beer cans piled everywhere, windows shot out in drunken fits, a brand new laptop blown away with a 12 gage because I changed the password in a drunken state and couldn't remember it my next drunk. In the morning I would throw up in the shower; trying to smoothly varnish my rough character and maintain the charade that I called life. As most of us find out I was the only one fooled.

In a strike of luck I cut my head in a stopper and it became infected. I had a terrible reaction to the antibiotics prescribed and was taken to the emergency room and stayed in the hospital for a week. Upon release from my stay and forced sobriety, I confided in my doctor and began counseling. I had panic attacks, insomnia, and nausea. I was given a pill for each but not a program.

I managed to stay sober for 6 weeks. It was a white knuckle ride. One night a friend came over with a case of beer. I felt confident and boasted, "I haven't drank in 6 weeks, come on in". Shortly I was drunk. I had never been a blackout drinker, but the combination of my meds and the alcohol was what it took. I don't remember getting in my truck. In less than a mile, I ran off the road and struck a mail box at 60 mph. I woke up 2 days later with a broken neck. I returned home with a fresh prescription of pain killers and a general self loathing. Nine days later I turned back to the bottle. In a blackout I took over 30 pills. I would have overdosed if I hadn't gotten in my new truck and drove off. This time I missed a curve and went airborne into a pine tree at 50 mph. The paramedics were amazed. While using the jaws of life to get to me, they saw that I was already in a neck brace. This time I lost my spleen. Twice alcohol had whispered my doom; this time I listened.

After a month in the hospital I was forced into rehab. There I was introduced to AA and the 12 steps. I was told there was a solution, a simple plan, and I never had to drink again. I was ready to listen to another voice, a voice of a higher power. After rehab, I attended meetings and continued to work earnestly. Legal troubles came and went. I was able to accept things that would have devoured me previously. I felt in tune with the world and myself like never before. The drink problem had been removed. I began to realize that my problems were only muted by alcohol. As I continue to work this program, I find relief for today. These promises would come true for me if I was willing to work for them.

Ernest C.

Experience, Strength and Hope

Step Eight

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

This is the first of the two steps designed to really clear our side of the street. As Alcoholics we have of course acted badly in our lives, and have hurt a number of people in our past. In this step we look at the wreckage we have left in our lives, with complete honesty and open mindedness. This sets the stage for restoring relationships to the best of our ability in Step Nine.

According to Bill Wilson in the 12 & 12, we must forgive the people that we put on our 8th Step list. Otherwise we run the risk of going on the emotional defensive when dealing with these wrongs. We may purposefully forget what we did, or justify what we did as a reaction to what was done to us. And in many cases where true wrong was done to us, we are dealing with fellow sufferers, sick people whom we may have hurt as well. Forgiving them defuses the buildup of the resentments that are so dangerous to us Alcoholics. We keep the focus on us and what we did, cleaning our side of the street and letting others tend to their side.

In this step we get in touch with our basic flaws. By examining how we wronged others we can see the patterns of our lives, and see where our flaws caused things to go wrong over and over again. In identifying these patterns we can also see them as they start to appear in the future, and avoid repetitions of the same behavior that caused so many of our past woes.

This step can take some time, years in some cases, as wrongs are initially forgotten or trivialized. Later work may bring up the memories of wrongs we have committed, that will be added to our list. And of course we may never remember some of the wrongs we committed, or the people we wronged, and must be satisfied with doing the best we can do.

As the 4th step leads to the 5th, this step leads to the 9th. I have heard it said that the best way to approach this step is the same as the 4th, to pretend that the next step does not exist. Otherwise it may be easy to find ways to avoid placing some names on the list that really belong there. I know there were some names on my 8th list that I didn't want there, and didn't want to deal with, ever. But my sponsor told me to put them there, and I could make a decision on what to do with them later, in the 9th Step.

Doug D.

Tradition Eight

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

To my delight and the delight of many other AAs across the nation there has developed a rising interest in returning to what many of us refer to as the "basics" of the AA program through research and study of the history of AA. *The Big Book, The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, AA Tradition How it Developed* by Bill W., and of course the early books *AA Comes Of Age* and other familiar ones provide us with many of the experiences, trials and tribulations of the early AA groups. "Alcoholics Anonymous will never have a professional class. We have gained some understanding of ancient words 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' We have discovered that at the point of professionalism money and spirituality do not mix. Almost no recovery from alcoholism has ever been brought about by the world's best professional, whether medical or religious. We do not decry professionalism in other fields, but we accept the sober fact that it does not work for us. Every time we have tried to professionalize our 12th Step, the result has been exactly the same: Our single purpose has been defeated."

The inevitable "money motive" compromises the face-to-face work with the alcoholic prospect. Helping the alcoholic who still suffers can be based only on the desire to help and be helped. This face-to-face origin of AA, Ebby sitting at the kitchen table with Bill W. at his home, then Bill sitting with Dr. Bob at the home of Henrietta Sieberling, has shown us that this way worked and is still working today.

The 12 x 12 tells us that professionalism had been the cause of much contention within our fellowship. It was first agreed that the 12th Step couldn't be sold for money, which has proven wise. It was also decided that AA couldn't hire service workers nor could any AA member carry our knowledge into other fields which later proved a counsel of fear. Today that fear has been largely dispelled due to experience. Our service workers "do" not do 12th Step work; they make 12th Step work possible. Packaging books and literature and channeling them worldwide, stacks of letters and numerous e-mails must be answered, right contacts with the world outside must be maintained. AA must tend to its lifelines to continue to survive. We hire AA staff members and pay them. They are professional workers, not professional AAs. Experience has also shown that members who accept employment with outside agencies dealing with the alcohol problem are not professionalizing AA's 12th Step. There is no need to discourage our members who work in these careers nor do we have the right to do so. It was learned early that it is actually antisocial to forbid them. AA cannot be such a closed corporation that we hoard our knowledge and experience as "top secret". If an A.A. member acting as a citizen can become a better researcher, educator, personnel officer, then why not? Everybody gains. To quote the last sentence of Step 8 from the 12 x 12: "Our Twelfth Step is never to be paid for, but those who labor in service are worthy of their hire."

Bettye B.R.

Intergroup 5 News

INTERGROUP 5 MEETING MINUTES JULY 2009

Groups Represented: Happy Hour, Lloyd New Hope, Lake Jackson, Central, Home Group, Bradfordville, Open Door, Living Sober and Woodville. 12 people attended; 5 Intergroup reps were present.

Secretary's Report: Approved and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Paid final A1 Answering Service bill and paid two months of Line 1 Communications; the new monthly fee is only \$56.90. Our new phone service is drastically less than the price we had with A1 Answering Service. Annual insurance was paid too. Approved and accepted

Office Report: Pete is in need of Summer 2009 editions of the *Where & When*. He will contact the person responsible for making these and offer to take on this task himself. The office key was taken and another key had to be made. Phone volunteers for weekdays are needed; please contact Pete or Jeff through the Intergroup office.

Literature Report: Informed that Janet is interested in this service position; Pete has offered his services as well. Perhaps this can be a shared arrangement. Pete will notify Janet to confirm her interest in this position.

Activities Report: Tracy absent due to illness; Christy reported for her. Due to donations received from groups, the Intergroup reserve was not used for the Founder's Day Picnic and can be used for the Holiday party. All leftover decorations were donated to the FDFS Convention. Thanks to those who brought fans; it helped tremendously with the heat. Suggested (for next year); make ALL announcements prior to the speaker.

Web Committee Report: Updated the meetings listed on the website. Pete will check to see if the Chattahoochee meeting is still, well "meeting".

District Report: Holly has created an email address for each committee position and they should be available soon. Also, looking into climate controlled storage for the archives to be housed. The many positions open at District will start January 1, 2010 unless otherwise stated. Roberto is starting a Spanish speaking meeting in Quincy, will relay information when available.

12 Step News: Absent.

Old Business: AA softball game cancelled due to heat. Will reschedule in the Fall.

New Business:

1. Allowing announcements and/or flyers on website. Decided that each case would be voted on when submitted to Intergroup.
2. Holiday party date tentatively set for December 12th. Discuss holiday party speaker next meeting.
3. Due to increased cost of living voted to increase Office Representative's reimbursement check from \$150 to \$250. Approved.
4. Treasurer suggested closing Wakulla Bank (Literature) account and opening another account at Capital City Bank where the Intergroup account is. Separate accounts but much more convenient. Approved.

Happy, Joyous & Free, Christy T.

NEW MEETINGS

TMH Behavioral Health Center

1616 Physicians Drive
Tallahassee, FL
Wednesdays @ 7:30 p.m.
Contact: Holly H. 425-1314

VA

Mahan Drive
Tallahassee, FL
Wednesdays @ 6:45 p.m.
Everyone is welcome. Not limited to Veterans

WESTSIDE GROUP

Bethel Methodist Church Fellowship Hall
Tallahassee, FL
Tuesdays @ 7:00 p.m.
Pizza and Pepsi every 2nd Tuesday of the month

Happy A.A. July Anniversary

Bradfordville: Amy-1, Tony-2, Greg-15, Gerry-17, Jeannette-24, Nancy-29
Central : Alison-1, Chip-1, Geoff H.-1, Cindy-2, Clay W.-2, Daniel W.-2, Jordan B.-2, Laura D.-3, Paul W.-3, Jackie L.-6, Keith Ann-9, Matt N.-10, Mike B.-12, Cathy L.-17, Russell P.-22, Ann D.-26, Neal B.-30
Lake Jackson: Amanda-2, Clair B.-20
Living Sober, Happy Hour & Conscious Contact: Ann H.-1, Chip L.-1, Julia K.-1, Kelli L.-2, Tonya A.-2, Jim D.-8, Linda B.-15, Ed V.-16
Mustard Seed: Jim O.-30
Nite Owl: Matt C.-5

Happy A.A. June Anniversary

Capital City: Bill B.-8, Sue-13
Lake Jackson: Cherie T.-1



EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

INTERGROUP 5 NEWS

Web stats: 5,502 pages were sent from the Intergroup 5 website. The following 56 calls were answered by volunteers:

12 Step	1
Al-Anon	1
AA info	14
Meeting Info	33
Misc.	7

Great job volunteers!!!!

CONFERENCES AND OTHER EVENTS

Summer Serenity at the Beach 2009

August 20–23, 2009
 Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa
 4000 Sandestin Blvd. S.
 Destin, FL 32550
 (850) 604-1367

46th Women's International Conference

February 11-14, 2010
 Doubletree Hotel
 5780 Major Boulevard
 Orlando, FL 32819



An Irishman who had a little too much to drink is driving home from the city one night and, of course, his car is weaving violently all over the road. A cop pulls him over.

“So,” says the cop to the driver, “Where have ya been?”

“Why, I’ve been to the pub of course,” slurs the drunk.

“Well,” says the cop, It looks like you’ve had quite a few to drink this evening.” “I did all right,” the drunk says with a smile.

“Did you know,” says the cop, standing straight and folding his arms across his chest, “that a few intersections back, your wife fell out of the your car?”

“Oh, thank heavens,” sighs the drunk. “For a minute there, I thought I’d gone deaf.”



IMPORTANT AUGUST DATES IN A.A. HISTORY

Aug 1934 - Rowland H and Cebrá persuade court to parole Debby T. to them.
 Aug 1939 - Dr. Bob wrote & may have signed article for Faith magazine.
 Aug 1981 - Distribution of Alcoholics Anonymous passes 3 million.
 Aug 1, 1943 - Washington Times-Herald (DC) reports on AA clubhouse, to protect anonymity withholds address.
 Aug 3, 1954 - Brinkley S. gets sober at Towns Hosp after 50th detox.
 Aug 8, 1879 - Dr. Bob born in St. Johnsbury, VT.
 Aug 9, 1943 - LA groups announce 1000 members in 11 groups.
 Aug 11, 1938 - Akron & NY members begin writing stories for Big Book.
 Aug 15, 1890 - E M Jellinek is born, author of "The Disease Concept of Alcoholism" and the "Jellinek Curve".
 Aug 16, 1939 - Dr Bob and Sister Ignatia admit 1st alcoholic to St. Thomas Hospital, Akron, Ohio.
 Aug 18, 1988 - 1st Canadian National AA Convention in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
 Aug 19, 1941 - 1st AA Meeting in Colorado is held in Denver.
 Aug 25, 1943 - AA group donates Big Book to public library in Quincy, MA.
 Aug 26, 1941 - Bill writes Dr Bob to tell him Works Publishing has been incorporated
 Aug 28, 1954 - "24 Hours a Day" is published by Richmond W.

DIZ T.