



# The Message

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

TRUSTED SERVANTS

INTERGROUP 5, INC MARCH 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—Heather D.  
 Website—Debbie C.—Open Door  
 Activities—Tracy G.—Happy Hour  
 Membership—Vacant  
 Newsletter—Sandy M & Julie W  
 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—Maggi W.—Central  
 Treatment—Kris C.—Central  
 Corrections—David G— Happy Hour  
 Grapevine—Vacant  
 Accessibilities--Steve B.—CASA Men's  
 Archives—Richard T.—Conscious  
 Contact

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As for most alcoholics, for as long as I can remember, I have always felt different from others and that I could never measure up. Everyone else knew how to live life. Growing up in an abusive, unpredictable household, it was expected of me to not show negative emotions. I started self-mutilating at the age of 10 to deal with my unbearable pain. I mention this because it has everything to do with my journey into alcoholism.

When I had my first real drunk at 13, I thought, shortly before I began my first of many episodes of roaring projectile vomiting, "I want to feel like this forever! I'm finally as good as you. Actually, I might even be better. Now I know why my step-dad drinks all of the time!" Not long after I had made a flimsy attempt at suicide at the age of 17, I started to drink more regularly with more frequency. My life deteriorated rather quickly. By the age of 21, I had spent time in a mental hospital (due to drinking and hurting myself), destroyed most of the relationships in my life, lost my dignity, integrity and sanity, demolished my car in a head on collision (driving drunk of course) and had no hope in anything or anyone. To say that I hated myself was an understatement.

On page 44 in the text of Alcoholics Anonymous it states, "If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer". That was definitely me.

On the morning of January 10<sup>th</sup> of 2000, God did for me what I could not do for myself. My spiritual experience began. I did something that was not "like me". I got on my knees on the hard, cold floor of my room that morning and cried out to the God of my understanding for help. I said, "I think alcohol has power over me." That, my friends, was not me. I went to my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous that day and my life was forever changed.

I'd like to sit here and say that I did everything perfectly that *those people* told me to do and that my life immediately became wonderful, but I can't. Despite my tremendous pain, I still thought that I was too young and that it wasn't fair that I had to go to *those meetings*. I can tell you, though, that fighting everything tooth and nail is not the best way to go. Luckily, I had enough pain and desperation to be willing to do the steps to the best of my ability and be rigorously honest with another lady in the program. I was willing to go to any lengths to stay sober, whatever that meant. Through working the 12 steps, I have had that spiritual awakening. I can laugh and smile today. There are so many wonderful sayings in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous that have really stuck with me. One in particular is, "Don't leave before the miracle happens." I'm so grateful that I didn't and that the miracle has indeed happened in *this* alcoholic's life. By the grace of God, the fellowship of A.A. and the twelve steps, I am sober one more day.

Autumn



# Experience, Strength and Hope



## Step Three

*Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.*

Step One was probably the easiest step I've taken. Once I quit denying I had a drinking problem, it was obvious that I was powerless over my disease and that my life had become unmanageable after 38 years of drinking, lying and cheating. While I can honestly admit that there are some "not yet's" that haven't happened to me, I know they are out there just waiting for me to trip up.

As Cameron said in *The Message* last month, "in order for him to take the second step, he had to have faith that he could be restored to sanity." I had that faith for some time, but struggled with actually making the decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God.

At first I didn't understand what it meant to turn my will and my life over to the care of anyone, much less a God or a Higher Power that I couldn't even see. Once I finally understood that until I admitted that I had been defeated, and consented to turn my life over to God, could I actually understand the true meaning of serenity. It finally dawned on me that my continued reliance of my own self was the reason for the constant mess in my life.

A dear friend in Naples, Florida (who isn't in the AA Fellowship) kept telling me "just turn it over to HIM, trust HIM, and you will have a NEW LIFE." There are several key points that she has helped me understand and willing to accept, which are:

- The action of turning your life over to God only has to happen once;
- The action of turning your will over to God is a daily recommitment; and
- If I ask for HIS will to be done and not mine, I will be supremely happy and at peace with myself.

Kristin

## Tradition Three

*The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking..*

In the chapter on Tradition Three in the 12&12, it is said that fear is the true basis of intolerance. This is reason for the varied 'protective' regulations that early groups submitted to the General Service Office. They were afraid of admitting alcoholics with other 'complications' to the group. Do you know any alcoholics without complications? I'd like to meet one. Or do you know any 'respectable' alcoholics? I am truly grateful that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Even in my months of relapse after relapse, my desire was strong, so I kept coming back. I didn't have to believe in your conception of God, I didn't have to pay dues, there was no dress code, and no one was checking my résumé at the door. To me, Tradition Three is the foundation of our fellowship because like the early groups, I must overcome my fears and develop a tolerance of those who are different from me. Like the early groups, I must learn that I don't know what's best for everyone in the group (I certainly don't know what's best for me!). Early on, I allowed my intolerance to divorce me from identification and prevent me from listening to the message these complicated and unrespectable alcoholics carry. Today, some of my favorite AA members are the asylum inmates, prisoners, queers, plain crackpots, and especially the fallen women!

Anonymous



A drunk staggers into a Catholic Church, enters a confessional booth, sits down but says nothing. The Priest coughs a few times to get his attention but the drunk continues to sit there. Finally, the Priest pounds three times on the wall. The drunk mumbles, "ain't no use knockin', there's no paper on this side either."



# Intergroup 5 News



## INTERGROUP 5 MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 24, 2009

**Groups Represented:** Happy Hour, Lloyd New Hope, Lake Jackson, Crawfordville, Bradfordville, Home, Central, Woodville, Night Owl. 8 IG5 representatives were present. 18 people attended. Wow, great attendance record!

**Secretary's Report:** Approved and accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Approved and accepted.

**Office Report:** After the **Winter Where and When's** were printed we received numerous updates and/or corrections. The changes reflect on the web site, but have not been printed yet. Of course you can always download them from the web yourself. A printer was donated to the office; thank you. Rob K. will stay on another month while the phone transition takes place. **\*\*\*** Volunteers are always needed to answer the phone. Remember, you can't keep it if you don't give it away!

**Literature Report:** Central will now order directly from IG so we will see an increase in orders. Heather has jumped right into her new position and is doing a great job!

**Activities Report:** Tracy is reserving Pavillion 13 at Tom Brown Park for our Founder's Day Picnic on June 20th. Groups volunteering to bring meat has worked well so we'll ask that again this year.

**Web Committee Report:** Nothing to report, but please log on to our website ([www.intergroup5.org](http://www.intergroup5.org)) and see what's out there.

**District Report:** Decided to leave the Bridging the Gap position vacant for a while.

**12 Step News:** Please contact Jeff D. if you are interested in being on the contact list.

**Old Business:** Maggie and Rob will be getting together for her "recording session" on the new phone message. We expect this will be up & running by our next IG meeting.

**New Business:** 1) IG to resume making contributions to Faith Presbyterian for graciously providing rooms for our monthly meetings.

2) Pete S. elected as our new Office Coordinator.

**It's a good day to be sober, Christy T.**

## MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

**\*\*THE CURE ALL GROUP\*\***—Open Meeting  
Bayside Deli  
1349 Coastal Hwy.  
Panacea, Florida  
Mondays @ 7:00 p.m.

**\*\*THE HOPE REVIVAL GROUP\*\***  
Big Bend Homeless Coalition  
West Pensacola & Municipal Way  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Mondays @ 1:30 p.m.

**\*\*MUSTARD SEED GROUP HAS MOVED\*\***  
Timberlane Church of Christ  
3569 Timberlane School Road  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Mondays @ 6:00 p.m., Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 12:30 p.m.

**\*\*SOUTHSIDE group has dissolved.\*\***

**BTG/Corrections/TF Committee Meeting**  
March 8, 2009, 3:00 p.m.  
909 Gadsden Street  
Tallahassee, FL

**District 5 Business Meeting**  
March 18, 2009, 7:00 p.m.  
Faith Presbyterian Church  
Tallahassee, FL

## Happy A.A. February Anniversary

**Central :** Shawn I.—3, Adam G.—3, Lilly A.—3, Danny P.—8, Clara H.—10, Bobby C.—16, Dick L.—18, Doug B.—21, Bill L.—22, Jim K.—34

**Lake Jackson:** Tad F.—27

**Living Sober, Happy Hour & Conscious Contact:**

Micki B.—1, Eddie L.—4, Mike P.—14, Juliet C.—22, Paul H.—31, Dick M.—47

**Mustard Seed:** Norm—1

**Westside:** John W.—34





# EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS



## INTERGROUP 5 NEWS

**Web stats:** 4,643 pages were sent from the Intergroup 5 website as of 2/25. The following 31 calls were answered by volunteers:

12step - 1, Al-Anon - 1, AA info - 4,  
Meeting info - 21, Misc-4

## IMPORTANT MARCH DATES IN A.A HISTORY

March 1936 - AA had 10 members staying sober. At end of 1936 A.A. had 15 members.

March-May 1938 - Bill begins writing the book Alcoholics Anonymous. Works Publishing Inc established to support writing and printing of the book.

March 1940 - Mort J. came to LA from Denver; started custom of reading Chapter 5 Big Book at Cecil group.

March 1941 - Second printing of Big Book.

March 1941 - 1st Prison AA Group formed at San Quentin.

March 1946 - The March of Time film produced by NY AA office.

March 1951 - American Weekly publishes memorial article for Dr. Bob.

March 1, 1941 - Jack Alexander's Saturday Evening Post article published and membership jumped from 2,000 to 8,000 by years end.

March 3 1947 - Nell Wing started work at Alcoholic Foundation 415 Lexington Avenue.

March 4, 1891 - Lois W is born.

March 5, 1945 - Time Magazine reports Detroit radio broadcasts of AA members.

March 7, 1941 -- Boston newspaper reported that any drunk who wanted to get well was more than welcome at the AA meeting at 115 Newbury St., at 8 PM Wednesdays.

March 11, 1949 - The Calix Society, an association of Roman Catholic alcoholics maintaining their sobriety through participation in AA, was formed in Minneapolis by 5 Catholic AA members.

March 14, - South Orange, NJ, AA group held an anniversary dinner with Bill W as guest speaker

March 16, 1940 - Alcoholic Foundation & Works Publishing move from Newark to 30 Vesey St in lower Manhattan. First headquarters of our own.

March 21, 1881 - Anne R, Dr Bobs wife, is born.

March 21 1966 - Ebby dies.

March 22, 1951 - Dr William Duncan Silkworth dies at Towns Hospital.

March 22, 1984 - Clarence S, "Home Brewmeister", dies.

March 23, 1936 - Bill & Lois visit Fitz M, "Our Southern Friend", in Maryland.

March 25, 1898 -- Jim B ("The Vicious Cycle") was born.

March 31, 1947 - 1st AA group formed in London, England

DIZ T.

## CONFERENCES

### Flint River Roundup

March 13-15, 2009

Hilton Garden Inn

Albany, GA

### Founder's Day Florida Style

June 5-7, 2009

Residence Inn Marriot

600 W. Gaines Street

Tallahassee, FL

### 53rd Florida State Convention

July 29-August 2, 2009

Hyatt Regency Jacksonville

225 East Coastline Drive

Jacksonville, FL 32202

**Responsibility:** The idea of trusting our HP is a popular one these days. But for some it is not; many of us don't know what this really means and we often have a hard time doing it. This is partly because the story of humankind is most often presented as a story about struggle, control, and survival, instead of one of trust and collaboration with our HP. Yet, in truth, we need to adhere to both ideas in this life.

On the one hand, there is much to be said about exerting control over our environment. We created shelter to protect ourselves from the elements. We hunted for animals and invented agriculture to feed ourselves. We built social infrastructures to protect ourselves and create communities. This is how we survive and grow as a civilization. However, it is also clear that there are plenty of things that we cannot control, no matter how hard we try, and we often receive support from an unseen force, a HP that provides us with what we cannot provide for ourselves.

It is a good idea to take responsibility for the things in life that we can control or create. We work so we can feed, clothe, and shelter our loved ones and ourselves. We manifest our dreams and visions in physical form with hard work and forethought. But at a certain point, when we have done all that we can, we must let go and allow our HP to take over. This requires trust. It requires a trust that runs deeper than just expecting things to turn out the way we want them to. Sometimes they will, and sometimes they won't. We develop equanimity and grace as we learn to trust that and work our program. With the guiding hand of our HP, life will unfold exactly the way it should. We are engaged in an ongoing relationship with our HP that responds to our thoughts and actions. "I am responsible ... When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that, I am responsible. "

Anonymous