

Volume 11, Issue 11

November 2012

News0777



NEEDS SUPPORT

The District 15 Committee is asking more groups to send General Service Representatives to its monthly meetings, and has openings for alternate chairpersons for all its committees.

Unity Meeting

Pasco Big Book, hosts the monthly **Unity Meeting**, 7 PM Saturday, Nov. 17, at Redeemer Community Church, 9230 Ridge Rd., NPR, 1 mile E. of Little Rd., S. side. Enjoy Fellowship, two speakers & dessert while supporting AA work. Dec. Unity host will be Hoot N Holler. And January is still open.

Will your group sponsor a Unity meeting? Call Loraine K., Unity Coordinator, (727)935-5543

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Step Eleven:

“Sought Through Prayer and Meditation to Improve Our Conscious Contact With God as we Understood Him, Praying Only For The Knowledge of His Will For Us And The Power To Carry It Out.”

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the French Jesuit priest, paleontologist and theologian, made the oft quoted observation: “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.” Our 11th Step: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry it out, emphasizes this spiritual truth and encourages alcoholics in recovery to harness its power.

The implication of this Step is that we already have a God consciousness. But, awareness is not enough. The Big Book suggests that we go further and “that means more action.” Specifically prayer and meditation. We are asked to put our “thought-life” on a much higher plane. Initially, to focus our thinking before going to sleep at

night and upon awaking each day - but eventually, we are to so employ our will throughout the day, that God-centered thinking becomes automatic. “How can I best serve Thee – Thy will (not mine) be done”.

The practical benefits of Step 11 are that we will be free from the danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity or foolish decisions. And, as a result of not burning up energy trying to control people places and things, we are more “efficient”.

The Big Book reminds us that “we alcoholics are undisciplined” and so in working this Step, I had to make a commitment to spend at least ten minutes each morning improving my “conscious contact.” In the early years, I did what many of us do. I read two or three daily devotionals and tried to quietly reflect on a line or two of the readings, applying the ideas to my life. Later the 10 minutes became 15 minutes as I attempted to pray for God’s will in the lives of particular people. In each case, I prayed as if I was that person. In so doing, I began to actually

believe that “all people, including ourselves, are to some extent emotionally sick as well as frequently wrong.” (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Step 10).

I would then sit with my palms face down on my thighs and relinquish anything that was disturbing me. I would imagine the day ahead and any worries or fears I might have. Then, I would turn my palms facing up, and again anticipate the day ahead, but this time God was with me through each challenge. Imaging peaceful, loving outcomes and asking God to fill my heart with truth, patience, tolerance and love, I might end my ritual with the 7th Step Prayer.

There were literally years when I prayed with pen in hand, writing my thoughts and feelings. For much of my sobriety, I attended at least one retreat a year. Sometimes I chose to spend a day apart in solitude at a nearby monastery. The busier and more “successful” I became, the harder it was to keep my prayer and meditation commitment and inevitably I would lose my

Step Eleven Cont/Tradition Eleven

sense of grounded well being. It took a lot of discomfort before I would accept that the busiest times were the times I most needed to dedicate a place in my schedule to pray and meditate.

Perhaps my most striking experience with Step Eleven was a decision I made to attend a five day retreat during which eight hours of each day were spent in silent meditation. There were forty participants and we met each morning in a yurt on the shore of a lake in upstate New York. The leader, John Wellwood, author, psychologist and metaphysician, would begin guiding us in breathing and then present the same question for each to ponder: "Who am I?" Whenever our thoughts wandered, we were to come back to that simple question. If an answer presented itself - like "I am a daughter - or a sister, wife, mother etc." we had to ask the question again: "Yes. O.K. That's true. But who am I?" Even "A child of God" was somehow incomplete. Finally - what I knew to be true was that I was not a separate being at all. I shared a oneness with all people of all times and in all places. A oneness with creation. "Deep calls to Deep" is the way the psalmist said it. And what I felt, was love. An unbounded love for all people.

Well of course the feeling did not last in quite that way for very long. "Reality" - kids and jobs and imperfect co-workers - set in. But not in

quite the same way. Because "REALITY" was something different now. And all the day to day struggles so seemingly contrary to Spiritual Truth, were somehow less powerful.

I think that is what Step Eleven intends to remind us. Get conscious! Wake up! Remember! At the heart of the matter, each soul exists for God... a loving God of our own understanding, to seek and do God's will.

Carolyn M.

Tradition Eleven:

"Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy".

In effect AA's "public relations policy" is to have no public relations policy. Instead, AA relies on the principle of "attraction rather than promotion." And, AA must accomplish this while remaining accessible to anyone in need of help! Thus, this inherently paradoxical public relations policy must be balanced with our responsibility pledge: "When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there..." Moreover, as Bill W. so aptly noted: "By temperament, nearly every one of us had been an irrepressible promoter, and the prospect of a society composed almost entirely of promoters was frightening. Considering this

explosive factor, we knew we had to exercise self-restraint."

In regard to this principle of "personal anonymity at the public levels of press, radio and films", I have heard many AA members comment, that were AA promoted by the rich and famous, that alone would have been enough to keep them away! Most alcoholics, in their "terminal uniqueness" would rather not join an organization that appeared to be a trend or a "fad" even if their lives depended on it. And the danger of having a famous spokesperson for AA is obvious. Since we are all "one drink away" - what if our spokesperson slipped? How would that reflect on the organization? Our "primary purpose" had to be protected.

Of course, as God would have it, our commitment to anonymity became one of our greatest promotional assets. "Here was something rare in the world - a society which said it wished to publicize its principles and its work but not its individual members."

There can be no doubt that over the decades the AA program, has earned its place as a major force in society. The "Twelve Steps" have become part of our vernacular. Sit coms, films, even the movie Nemo, reference our spiritual program. That is how much Bill and Bob's

vision has become woven into the fabric of our contemporary lives

There is a smart phone app for taking a daily Tenth Step inventory. Meetings are not only held in every corner of the earth, they can be attended in cyberspace! But no matter how much the world has changed in more than Seventy Five years, we of Alcoholics Anonymous are strangely untouched. And so we shall remain as long as we trust the wisdom of our AA ancestors and submit individually and collectively to that one ultimate authority - a loving God.

Carolyn M.

Central Office

Needs Support

**Sunday Hotline Office
Staff for:**

2 shifts daily Mon.-Fri.

10 AM - 1:30 PM

Or

**1:30 PM- 5 PM 1 shift
Sat. 10 AM - 1 PM**

And

**The nightline needs
Volunteers two years
sobriety required**

**Contact Central Office
for more information.**

An Agnostic's Spiritual Awakening

I was more defiant than ever when I re-entered AA in August 1987, having come in and gone back out twice before, I was convinced that the Twelve Steps—excepting the first one—weren't for me. I was too intellectual, too steadfast in my agnosticism, for any spiritual experiences. I still equated "spiritual awakening" with 'getting religion,' and I firmly believed I would prefer dying in the gutter to getting religion.

My two previous encounters with AA the first in 1976 the second in 1983 had given me about six weeks exposure to the program. I had heard all you had to say, I thought, about spirituality and the Higher Power, I had read Chapter Four and Appendix II. I was not impressed.

Herbert Spencer's observation about contempt prior to investigation was, I agreed, quite correct. But I had investigated. I had even practiced a few different religions at one time or another before deciding that none of it was for me. Still, I maintained an intellectual interest in the subject. I'd become something of an armchair scientist, and humanity's evolution was among my special interests. Obviously, religious beliefs and their development over the ages were a major part of humanity's own story.

Still, like many intellectuals, I felt it was a matter of time before we all outgrew such ideas, if only our high-tech civilization survived. No matter how the theologians dressed it up in modern language, to me religion remained superstition.

What Bill W. had to say in "We Agnostics" was nothing new to me. I had encountered his arguments, and others far more sophisticated, attempting to defend the logic of believing in a Higher Power. I had weighed then all, and found them wanting.

I went back out those first two times because I hadn't hurt badly enough. Still, I was luckier than most. Even my third bottom was a high one. My job was still secure, I had never even been stopped, let alone ticketed, while driving drunk. My physical health was fine. But I was in enough emotional pain to make me desperate, and I had become convinced, finally and totally that if I kept drinking it would get worse.

Although I was more convinced than ever that I could never take the Second Step, or any beyond it, I came back to the meetings, knowing that if I got nothing else from the Fellowship, you could help me stay away from that first drink. I thought that would be enough, that if I could just stay sober, I could manage my own life.

It took about a month of drying out for me to realize I hadn't finished taking the First Step; to realize that, even if I wasn't drinking, my life still would be unmanageable until I overcame my terminal uniqueness and found a way to make the program work for me. And, at that point, the point at which I began to acquire a little willingness, a way was revealed to me, a way in which I could believe in a power greater than myself without compromising any of the fundamental principle out of which my agnosticism had grown.

Continued next page

Donation Addresses

Please make donation checks payable to West Pasco Intergroup.

West Pasco/Tarpon Springs Intergroup

TREASURER

6611 US 19 Suite 505

New Port Richey, Fl. 34652

District 15 General

Service

TREASURER

P.O. Box 692

Elfers, FL 34680-0692

Area 15 General Service

Area 15 Treasurer

PO Box 650699

Vero Beach, FL 32965-0699

AA General Service

Office

PO Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, New York 10163

Treasurer's Report

September 2012

Beginning Balance..	\$4,353.28
Income.....	\$1,248.65
Expenses.....	\$.. 826.73
Ending Balance...	\$4,775.20

The first thing I had to do was resign from the debating society. That didn't mean I started agreeing with everything I heard. It means only that I listened without arguing, used what I could use, and filed the rest for future reference.

The second thing I did was to become an active member of my home group, which happened to be my sponsor's home group. (I'd gotten a sponsor immediately, I already knew that was one thing I'd better do right away.) I saw that whatever else spirituality might consist of it had to include being of maximum service to my fellow alcoholics, whether or not they were still suffering.

Once I did those two things, every question I needed an answer to was answered.

It might be that my Higher Power is the same thing as the rest of you call God I don't know. That's one reason I still call myself an agnostic. Every promise contained in the Big Book has come true in my life, especially the one about being amazed before I was halfway through. Just to keep it simple,



especially the one about being amazed before I was halfway through. Just to keep it simple,

Tips For Newcomers For Working Step Eleven

1. Hit your knees when you get out of bed and ask your HP to keep you sober that day.
2. Read 3 pieces of AA approved literature a day.
3. Try to be still for 3 minutes before you start your day and empty your mind. Then ask your HP for direction that day and the power to carry it out.

during a discussion, sometimes I'll call it "God" rather than "the Higher Power". It is, whatever you or I call it, it works, just like the Big Book says it will if we're open minded.

I can see no way I could have had this spiritual awakening if I had not been driven into the arms of this Fellowship by my alcoholism. I know that many non-alcoholics have experienced it, but I don't believe I would have if I had been a normal drinker. So I am grateful today not only for my recovery, but for the disease from which I am recovering. My discovery of a Higher Power that I can use in my life has been worth every bit of the hell I had to go through to get there. (I wish it hadn't been necessary for others to go through this hell along with me, but all I can do now is make amends wherever possible.)

You told me each time I came in that I could experience the blessings beyond my wildest dreams. I could only think at the time:

These people obviously don't know how I can dream! But, like everything else you told me it was exactly true. While my material blessings still are less than what I could wish for, my life today is indeed far richer than any I could have dreamed of. And it really did not take much to bring it about. Just a little honesty, so I could finish taking the First Step, then a little open-mindedness, so I could begin the Second Step, and a little willingness to follow through with the rest of the program.

*Reprinted from AA Grapevine
October 1990 Issue*

Activity at Central Office

- Nightline calls.....64
- Office calls.....78
- Walk-ins.....46

GROUPS REPRESENTED AT INTER-GROUP OCTOBER 2012

- TWO OR MORE
- TROPICAL ATTITUDES
- NPR KISS
- 4TH DIMENSION
- CAME TO BELIEVE
- KEEP IT SIMPLE
- AMAZING GRACE
- NOON HIGH
- 3 & 11 STEPS
- MIRACLE GROUP
- HOW IMPORTANT IS IT
- WONDERFUL GROUP

MIRACLE GROUP

DANA F.....9

TROPICAL ATTITUDES

JILL30

JOHN.....2

WALTER.....11

EDDIE7

AA WAY

ED8

KEEP IT SIMPLE WOMEN'S

RITA O.....30

SERENITY GROUP

TERRI D.....24

JOE H.....16

PASCO BIG BOOK

BEVERLY24

BONNIE22

HAPPIER HOUR

MOE15

JERRY.....3

GAIL R.....5

DEBI3

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT

JEFF1

COTTEE RIVER

ROSEMARIE.....4

MARK A.....4

LIFE GOES ON

ED H.....28

TWO OR MORE

RICK27

BEVERLY24

AUGIE.....13

SCOTT S.....13

MIKE E.....2

DAVE B.....1

BILL1

BRYAN.....1

LIVING SOBER STUDY

JOHN S.....28

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Non AA Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by the Newsletter Committee or General Service Office. For any additional information, please use the addresses

Items and Ideas on Area Gatherings for A.A.s—

Nov. 3: Hernando Unity Meeting: 7:30-9 pm, Nativity Lutheran Church, 6363 Commercial Way (US 19), Weeki Wachee. Doors open at 6:30.

Nov. 10: District 15 Treatment Committee, noon, A Club. Join & carry the message into hospitals, detox & ACTS. Female members acutely needed.

Nov. 14: WPTSAA Intergroup meeting, 6:30 pm, Central Office, 6611 US 19, Ste. 505, NPR. **Send a representative of your group.**

Nov. 17: District 15 Corrections & Public Info/-CPC Committees both meet at noon at A Club and need members.

Nov. 17: Unity Meeting, 7 PM Redeemer Community church, 9230 Ridge Rd. NPR, 1 mile E. of Little Rd., S. side. Host: . Two speakers, fellowship, snacks. Doors open at 6:30.

Nov. 17: District 15 Gratitude Dinner, 8014 State Rd. 52, Hudson, doors open at 1:00, speaker at 3:00 and dinner at 4:00. Tickets \$10.00 and space is limited.

Nov. 20: District 15 Committee meeting, 6:30 pm, Community Congregational Church, 6533 Circle, Blvd., NPR. Come & learn. Each group should be represented. All AAs welcome.

Nov. 24 Pasco Big Book monthly Eating Meeting at 7 pm, followed by member anniversaries speakers meeting at 8 pm. Edna Ave. Club, 7137 Edna Ave., Hudson. "Bring a dish if you can."

Future Events

May 24-27, 2013: Summer Kickoff Classic, St. Petersburg, FL. Speakers, workshops, entertainment, Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Park. Info & updates summerkickoff-classic@verizon.net

March, 2013: Annual **Sober stock**, three days of meetings, workshops, music and free food in a camping setting, details will be posted on the soberstock.com website, still under construction.

July 24-28, 2013: 56th Florida State Convention, no info yet.

Elsewhere Around the Globe



Jan. 18-20, 2013: Annapolis, MD, Intergroup Convention, with Al-Anon participation. Speakers will include Sandy B., of Tampa. www.annapolisareaintergroup.org for details.

Feb. 22-24, 2013: Fifth Annual Cayman Islands Roundup, Sobriety in the Sun, South Sound Community Center, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, Speakers: Bob D. and Kent C. from Las Vegas, NV. For info: caymanroundup@gmail.com

Sept. 6-8, 2013: Sisters by the Sea, Waldorf Astoria, Naples, 475 Seagate Drive, Speaker Meetings, Open Discussion Meeting, Workshops, Ask It Basket, featuring Polly P. from Jacksonville, FL. Info: Peggy 239-269-7654.

Nov. 9-11: A.A. Southeast Regional Forum, Marriott Hotel, Boca Raton, FL gives A.A.s at all levels a chance to share with members of the General Service Board, General Service Office and Grapevine staff. Spanish translators will take part. Attendance is free. Advance registration is encouraged, but not required. Info on line at www.aa.org. Room discounts through Oct. 27.

The Newsletter Committee is soliciting info about any AA Activities; group events, dances, picnics etc.

Submit info by 20th of the month prior to publication to: news0777@yahoo.com

Or deliver or mail to

West Pasco/Tarpon Springs Intergroup

6611 US 19 Suite 505

New Port Richey, Fl. 34652

(727) 847-0777

Please keep in mind the seventh tradition: Every A. A. group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions. That means Central Office is supported by your group contributions. Thanks for your support!

GROUP DONATIONS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
647471	\$ 35.00												\$ 35.00
678675	\$ -												\$ -
1001 REASONS	\$ -			\$ 25.00									\$ 25.00
2 FOR 1 WOMEN'S GROUP	\$ -												\$ -
3 & 11 STEPS GROUP	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00		\$ 40.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$20.00			\$ 200.00
4TH DIMENSION	\$185.00			\$ 122.00		\$165.00			\$330.00				\$ 802.00
7 & UP GROUP	\$ -			\$ 25.00				\$ 80.00					\$ 105.00
A CLUB 12 & 12	\$ -												\$ -
A CLUB BIG BOOK	\$ -												\$ -
A CLUB JOE & CHARLIE	\$ -												\$ -
A CLUB SAT AM BIG BOOK	\$ 50.00												\$ 50.00
A CLUB SUN AM GRATITUDE	\$ -												\$ -
AA WAY GROUP	\$ -						\$ 1.00						\$ 1.00
ALONG SPIRITUAL LINES	\$ -												\$ -
AMAZING GRACE	\$ -					\$ 64.16							\$ 64.16
ANONYMOUS	\$ -												\$ -
AS BILL SAW IT	\$ -		\$ 25.00							\$25.00			\$ 50.00
BACK TO BASICS	\$ -								\$ 50.40				\$ 50.40
BAYOU GROUP	\$ 65.00												\$ 65.00
BEACH GROUP	\$ -												\$ -
BROWN BAGGERS	\$ 20.00			\$ 20.00		\$ 20.00			\$ 20.00				\$ 80.00
CAME TO BELIEVE	\$ -					\$ 25.00			\$ 25.00				\$ 50.00
CANDLELIGHT BEGINNERS	\$ -												\$ -
COR, ROPE, HOPE	\$ -												\$ -
COTEE RIVER YOUNG PEOPLE	\$ -							\$ 0.75		\$25.00			\$ 25.75
DISCOVER THE TRUTH	\$ -												\$ -
DISTRICT 15	\$ -	\$ 340.00											\$ 340.00
DOUG GRAAT	\$ 24.00												\$ 24.00
DRY DOCK	\$ -	\$ 0.70											\$ 0.70
EACH DAY NEW BEGINNING	\$ -	\$ 15.00			\$ 25.00				\$ 25.00				\$ 65.00
EASIER SOFTER WAY	\$ -	\$ 25.00											\$ 25.00
EDNA AVE JOE & CHARLIE TAPES	\$ -												\$ -
EDNA AVENUE CLUB 12&12	\$ -												\$ -
FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE	\$ -												\$ -
FRIDAY NIGHT SERENITY	\$ -												\$ -
GRAPEVINE	\$ -												\$ -
GRAPEVINE	\$ -												\$ -
HAPPIER HOUR	\$ -				\$ 300.00								\$ 300.00
HAPPY JOYOUS FREE	\$ 23.50	\$ 24.40	\$ 38.75	\$ 14.45	\$ 13.29								\$ 114.39
HOOT N HOLLER	\$ 0.50			\$ 31.74									\$ 32.24
HOW IMPORTANT IS IT	\$110.00			\$ 80.00		\$128.00							\$ 318.00
IN MEMORY OF RAY	\$ -	\$ 250.00											\$ 250.00
IN THE BEGINNING	\$ 0.40												\$ 0.40
INTERGROUP	\$ 19.00		\$ 17.01	\$ 20.00	\$ 17.00		\$ 22.00		\$ 14.00	\$16.00			\$ 125.01
JAMES GANG	\$ -												\$ -
KIS WOMEN'S GROUP	\$ -			\$ 60.00		\$ 35.00							\$ 95.00
K.I.S.S. GROUP		\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00				\$ 20.00						\$ 40.00
L.I.F.E. RECOVERY	\$ -												\$ -
LET'S GET BETTER TOGETHER	\$ -	\$ 90.00					\$ 102.00						\$ 192.00
LIFE DISCUSSION GROUP	\$ -			\$ 50.00									\$ 50.00
LIFE RECOVERY	\$ 5.00												\$ 5.00
LIVING SOBER	\$ -												\$ -
LIVING SOBER STUDY GROUP	\$ -						\$ 70.00						\$ 70.00
MEN ONLY	\$ -												\$ -
MEN'S LETS TALK	\$ -												\$ -
MIRACLE GROUP	\$ -		\$ 50.00										\$ 50.00
MONDAY NIGHT BIG BOOK	\$ -						\$ 75.00						\$ 75.00
MORNING INVENTORY	\$ -												\$ -
NEW HOPE BEGINNERS	\$ -		\$ 27.00	\$ 30.00		\$ 30.00	\$ 11.00						\$ 98.00
NEW LIFE GROUP	\$ -												\$ -
NOON HIGH	\$ -	\$ 228.06					\$ 236.53	\$ 47.72		\$86.48			\$ 598.79
NOT A GLUM LOT	\$ -	\$ 30.00	\$ 10.00		\$ 20.00		\$ 20.00		\$ 20.00		\$ 10.00		\$ 110.00
NPR KISS GROUP	\$ -	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00			\$ 10.00		\$ 10.00	\$10.00			\$ 60.00
PASCO BIG BOOK	\$ 0.85	\$ 60.00					\$ 120.00						\$ 180.85
SATURDAY MORNING BIG BOOK				\$ 40.00					\$ 60.00				\$ 100.00
SERENITY GROUP	\$ -	\$ 50.00		\$ 100.00		\$ 50.00				\$25.00			\$ 225.00
SOBER NOT DEAD			\$ 13.55	\$ 17.42					\$ 63.61				\$ 94.58
SUNDAY MORNING GRATITUDE	\$ 50.00		\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00			\$ 50.00			\$50.00			\$ 250.00
SURRENDER GROUP	\$ -												\$ -
THURSDAY 12&12	\$ -				\$150.00								\$ 150.00
TRIANGLE GROUP	\$ -												\$ -
TROPICAL ATTITUDES	\$ 40.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00		\$ 165.25	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00	\$30.00			\$ 575.25
TWO OR MORE	\$ -	\$ 100.00		\$ 138.00	\$ 95.00	\$ 83.50			\$ 47.00				\$ 463.50
UNITY MEETING	\$ 46.40	\$ 71.25	\$ 33.27	\$ 18.65	\$ 32.00	\$ 17.20	\$ 37.70	\$ 36.75	\$ 39.00				\$ 332.22
WHY IT WORKS	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 52.36		\$ 40.39		\$ 41.27		\$ 0.60	\$40.00			\$ 214.62
WONDERFUL SATURDAY STEP GROU	\$ -			\$ 133.35		\$100.00		\$100.00					\$ 333.35
TOTALS	\$714.65	\$1,384.41	\$406.94	\$1,055.61	\$792.68	\$737.86	\$1,001.75	\$345.22	\$784.61	\$327.48			\$7,561.21