

The Voice

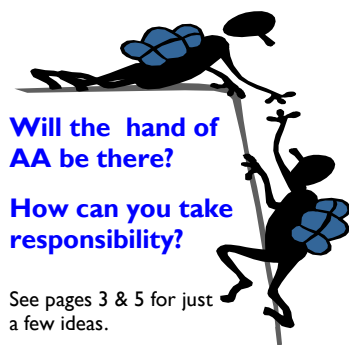
Volume 26, Number 8

August 2009



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Will the hand of AA be there?

How can you take responsibility?

See pages 3 & 5 for just a few ideas.

A quote for August

If we are about to ask forgiveness for ourselves, why shouldn't we start out by forgiving them, one and all.

Twelve and Twelve, page 78

One member's voice

Stepping into the sunlight

A story of experience, strength, and hope

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

As I did the work necessary for me to stay sober, I was not aware of the ultimate spiritual benefits that would change my life forever. I worked Step Eight in a simplistic manner at first, only concentrating on the people I had listed in my fourth step. I was told by my sponsor that the most important part of understanding Step Eight was the encompassing ALL word. That meant not all of the people I had harmed had engendered fear or resentments in me, nor were all of them involved in my sexual life.

My step book—*Twelve Steps and*

Twelve Traditions—reminded me that to do Step Eight, I had to redouble my efforts and be much more thorough in finding those who had suffered physical, mental, and spiritual harm as a result of my alcoholism. I have heard many people in AA say that sometimes we get too complicated, but I have found that in the working of the eighth and ninth steps, intensive digging and rigorous soul searching are the key to a peaceful happy life.

My first time working these steps I was more self-serving than the steps intended. I have since found that the intent of this step was and is for me to recognize my destructive behavior patterns towards my fellows, and then to

Continued page 4

Somebody answer that phone. Please!

My personal road to recovery started with a mid-morning phone call to 352-867-0660—the Intergroup 17 hotline. A friendly voice answered, and said, "Alcoholics Anonymous, can I help you?" I blurted out something like, "I want to stop drinking, but I don't know how." And then I started to cry.

I'll never know who was on the other end of the line that day, but she reassured me that there

was a way out, asked a few questions, chatted with me briefly, and directed me to an upcoming meeting nearby. She also asked if I needed transportation or if I wanted someone to talk to or to visit me right away.

The phone call was brief and simple, but somehow I found the determination to make it to the meeting at the ap-

pointed place and time. I found what I was looking for in that room.

The very group where I attended my first meeting has been my home group now for more than two-and-a-half years. It hasn't all been so simple and easy, but I date my sobriety to that phone call and to that individual whose willingness to serve as a volunteer at Intergroup 17 literally saved my life.

Continued page 7



Service Opportunities!

Hotline and 12th Step calls.

Intergroup has a critical need for volunteers to answer our 24-Hour Hotline "after business hours" from their own home or cell phones. Others needed to help respond to 12th Step calls. One year of sobriety required. Call Intergroup 17 to volunteer: 352-867-0660.

Webmaster for Intergroup 17.

Immediate need for a tech-savvy, service-minded volunteer to manage and maintain our website: www.aaocalamarion.org. A tremendous service opportunity for carrying the message. If you've got the skills and experience needed, call 352-867-0660.

Show your gratitude.

Volunteers needed for the 2009 District 17 Gratitude Dinner

If you're looking for service work mixed with a lot of fun, volunteer to work on the Gratitude Dinner Committee. Attend the next planning meeting: Thursday, August 20, 6:30 pm, Starbucks on the Square, Ocala. More info or questions? Call Francine: 352-390-7163.

Take the message to local correctional institutions.

Women's Meetings

There is a critical need to carry the message to women in prison (women only). Call Sherry R. at 352-622-4711.

Men's Meetings

More info, please contact Paul N. at 352-622-6967; John J. at 352-598-4319.

You may need to go the hospital.

Eddie F. is organizing meetings for hospital-bound members of our fellowship. Volunteers needed. Cell phone: 352-207-5144. Office: 352-237-8800. E-mail: eddie@ferrentinoandson.com

Through The Grapevine!

Many of our brothers and sisters in area corrections facilities enjoy reading *The AA Grapevine*. Drop off your old copies at the Intergroup Office, or coordinate a group effort through your GSR.

Publicize your service opportunity.

Send details to:
ocalaintergroup@msn.com
Or call 352-867-0660

August by the Books

STEP EIGHT

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

... "Faith without works is dead." ... "We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we made our inventory. We subjected ourselves to drastic self-appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning *we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol*. ... Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."

Alcoholics Anonymous, pages 76-77

TRADITION EIGHT

"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers."

"Alcoholics Anonymous will never have a professional class. ... Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid twelve-stepper. Almost from the beginning, we have been positive that face-to-face work with the alcoholic who still suffers could be based only on the desire to help and be helped.... Our Twelfth Step is never to be paid for, but those who labor in service for us are worthy of their hire."

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pages 166 & 171

CONCEPT EIGHT

"The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) with respect to larger matters of overall policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporate and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities."

Twelve Concepts for World Service, page 33

Brotherly Love. The Principle behind Step Eight.

In the practice of our program in Step 8, we embark on the “outward journey” making amends to people we have harmed by our alcoholism—whether while drinking or not. The principle of Brotherly Love is put into practical application when we are asked to look only at our part, and not at our brother’s “derelictions” at all.

We discover to “love a brother” is easy with someone who hasn’t crossed us, but not so easy with those who caused us harm. Here our defenses rise, and our ego collaborates to deflect a big portion of the blame on them.

Whether verbalized or only in thought, this harboring of blame does not help us achieve our goal of

peace and true tolerance. Indeed it will not allow us to fully love our brother or sister as God intends us to—thereby blocking the sunlight of the spirit.

In my practice, looking at my part was necessary for me to grow in spiritual understanding. With a goal of “seeing with God’s vision,” I slowly saw that many of the negative actions or attitudes others had toward me actually began with my own selfish or ego-driven actions or attitudes toward them.

In deeper spiritual application of Brotherly Love, I saw that even if derelictions do fall to my brother or sister, that they, like me, are growing spiritually and learning at their own pace. As God’s children, they

are due every bit of acceptance, tolerance, and understanding that I wish conferred upon me.

In the end, Brotherly Love is a whole lot about loving others as we would love ourselves. We can and should make good choices about our future actions, and even if we may feel that we cannot “hang” with certain folks, we can still love them unconditionally for their spiritual potential and their equal birthright as a worthy child of God. This practice will surely heal our own hearts and draw more of the goodness we desire into our lives.

Marianne M
Ocala, Florida
August 2009

Stepping into the sunlight

Continued from page 1

follow up with action in trying to restore me to sanity in my relationships.

I read a wonderful book in which the author describes sobriety as a “spiritual rest!” I have found that there can be no true spiritual rest unless Step Eight is done. It is rather difficult to discuss Step Eight without wandering into the ninth step as well. *Alcoholics Anonymous*, our *Big Book*, tells us that in working the first nine steps “we have entered the world of the spirit.”

In the world of the spirit, forgiveness rules supreme, and it is in Step Eight that I began to seek forgiveness spiritually. It is impossible to stop fighting anything and anybody without doing eighth-step work.

Thank God our program states that we claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection. I

know that the first time I worked Step Eight, it was the beginning of my journey into learning how to love my fellow man. Prior to the program, I never saw or understood the way my speech and actions affected others. By the time I was able to work Step Eight, I was starting to become aware of others, and that is the essence of Steps Eight and Nine.

These steps require a great deal of willingness. I once asked my sponsor, “How do I become willing?” He said, “You become willing by doing.” Nothing epitomizes this greater than the working of the fourth and fifth steps and the eighth and ninth. These are the steps that start to teach me forgiveness of myself and others.

I have found that many people have long-term sobriety, and yet are unhappy and angry. The reason, I think, is the shorting of step-work in this area. The *Big Book* chapter, “How It Works,” says, “Half measures avail us nothing.” My experi-

ence with Step Eight tells me this is certainly true.

I found that Step Eight was indeed a second inventory pointing out my character defects in relations with others. I know today that in the early workings of Step Eight, I was just beginning to touch the surface of my twisted thinking concerning how I viewed my fellow man. I did this step because I did not want to drink, later I did it because I did not want to hurt.

I know today that as I took Step Eight, I subconsciously worried about making amends. That was a barrier I had to overcome if I were to be really set free. Step Eight for me was truly the opening that allowed me to step into the sunlight of the spirit.

Bob C
Ocala, Florida
August 2009

The thoughts, expressions, and opinions expressed on these pages are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Alcoholics Anonymous or Intergroup 17, Ocala-Marion County, Florida.



How Groups and Individuals Support the Work of AA

Group contributions are the major funding source for the work of Intergroup 17 and other areas of AA. Many groups follow the 50-30-10-10 plan of support after they meet their own financial needs:

- 50 percent to Intergroup 17
- 30 percent to AA Worldwide General Services Office
- 10 percent to North Florida Area Assembly
- 10 percent to District 17

Group contributions

Intergroup 17
P.O. Box 1192
Ocala, FL 34478

District 17
P.O. Box 3081
Ocala, FL 34478

NFACAA
P.O. Box 567
Melbourne, FL 32902

The General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
6035 E. Tudor St.
New York, NY 10164

Member contributions

Individual members can provide financial support to Intergroup 17 in various ways.

- *Faithful Fivers*: \$5 each month
- *Double Nickel*: \$10 each month
- *Birthday Club Members*: \$1 or more per year of sobriety, on their AA "birthday"

All contributions large and small make a difference. Send to:

Intergroup 17
P.O. Box 1192
Ocala, FL 34478



I am responsible. Whenever anyone anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA to be there. For that I am responsible.

Group Contributions to Intergroup 17. Fiscal Year June 2009-May 2010.

Figures below reflect contributions for FY2009-10 through June 30, 2009 only.

Group	YTD 6/30	Group	YTD 6/30	Group	YTD 6/30
2nd Step Group		Grace Group		Primary Purpose	
11th Step Group		Grateful Gals		Shores of Sobriety	
17th Street Group		Happy Highlanders - Dunnellon		Sisters of Serenity - Ocklawaha	
164 Pages Group	\$ 00.95	Happy Hour Group		Start A New Life	
ACOA		Happy, Joyous & Free		Steps and Promises	
ALANON		Headstart Group	\$ 42.09	Stop Whining and Sober Up	
Acceptance		It's In The Book		Strength In Numbers - Belleview	
Alive and Well		Keep It Simple		Summerfield Group	
Anonymity Group		Last Call Group		Sundae Social Group	
As Bill Sees It - The Villages		Last House On The Block		TLC Group - the Centers	
Belleview Eye Opener Group		Life Is Good Sober - The Refuge		TenBroek Group	
Belleview Group	\$ 100.00	Living Sober	\$ 193.60	Unity Group	
Bonfire Group - The Refuge		Lunch Bunch		We Give Thanks	
Breakfast Club		Mano Abierta		We Give Up	
Came To Believe		Marion Oaks Group		Weir Crazy - Summerfield	\$ 100.00
Citra Group		McIntosh Group		Young People's Group - YPG	
Come As You Are		New Attitudes			
Conscious Contact		New Life Group		Birthday Club	
Experience, Strength & Hope		No Name Group		Double Nickels	\$ 10.00
Forest Group	\$ 40.00	Nueva Vida		Faithful Fivers	
Ft. McCoy Group		Ocala AM Men's Group	\$ 302.00	Individuals	
Fountain of Gratitude - Salt Springs		Ocala Group	\$ 167.10		
Free To Be		Ocklawaha AM Group		District 17	
God's Way Group		One Page At A Time		TOTAL FOR JUNE 2009	\$ 955.74

Local Events and Meetings of Interest

Ocala/Marion County

There are more than 140 AA meetings per week in Ocala/Marion county visit. Check out the Where & When online: www.aaocalamarion.org

Monday

Beginners Meeting

17th Street Group

6:00pm every Monday

Church of Christ

2730 SE Maricamp Rd., Ocala

Wednesday

Meditation

Conscious Contact

7:00pm every Wednesday

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

3452 NE Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Nueva Vida

7:00pm every Wednesday

150-A SW 23rd Ave. (1/2 block

South of Ft. King), Ocala

Thursday

Eat 'n Speak

Keep It Simple Group

Last Thursday of the month

Eat: 7:00pm Speaker: 8:00pm

Small fee for meal

ALL INVITED!

Ascension Lutheran Church

5730 SE 28th Street, Ocala

District 17 Monthly Meeting

6:00 pm last Thursday of the month

All GSRs. Everyone welcome.

St. Mark's United Methodist

1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Friday

Speaker Meeting

Experience, Strength and Hope

8:00pm every Friday

Druid Hills Methodist Church

1712 SE Lake Weir Blvd., Ocala

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Mano Abierta

7:00pm every Friday

2082 Walnut Street, Dunnellon

Saturday

Eat 'n Speak

Ocala Group

Last Saturday of the month

Eat: 7:00pm Speaker: 8:00pm

Small fee for meal All welcome.

St. Mark's United Methodist

1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Mano Abierta

7:00pm every Saturday

2082 Walnut Street, Dunnellon

Sunday

Intergroup 17 Monthly

5:15 pm second Sunday of month

Intergroup Reps. All welcome.

St. Mark's United Methodist

1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Conscious Contact Group 4th Anniversary Celebration

7 pm, Wednesday, September 16

All are invited to attend and to share in the celebration with a piece of birthday cake.

The format is an in-depth step study followed by a 20 minute guided meditation.

The discussion is always stimulating, and the meditations contribute to a restful state of mind and, sometimes, deep insights.

Meetings are held at 7 pm every Wednesday evening following the Wednesday Happy, Joyous and Free Group meeting at St. Mathews Lutheran 3452 NE Silver Springs Blvd.

Check us out!

District 17 Corner

Highlights of the meeting of District 17 on July 23 included:

- Election of a new Treatments Committee chair
- Confirmation the Annual Gratitude Dinner date for November 21, 2009
- Decision to allocate "pink can" expenditures only to AA conference-approved literature
- Consolidation of District 17A & B into one with one DCM

Talented? Willing? Curious?

Service opportunities abound at District 17: Accessibilities. Archives. Cooperation with the Professional Community. Public Information. Corrections. Grapevine. Literature. Treatment. Gratitude Dinner. Workshops. And more.

Interested? Intrigued?

Attend the next District 17 meeting.

District 17 Monthly Meeting Thursday August 27, 6 pm

St. Mark's United Methodist

1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

All welcome.

Intergroup 17 Call Center Report June/July 2009

12th Step calls	3
Meeting info	108
Purchase/order	56
Visitor	67
Al-Anon*	15
Miscellaneous	29

Through July 26. Does not include all after hours hot-line calls. *Calls requesting information on or needing assistance from Al-Anon are respectfully referred to the appropriate local resources.

Help Wanted.

Webmaster with a desire to serve. No pay. But the benefits are incredible!

Intergroup 17 needs a tech-savvy, service-minded volunteer to manage and maintain our website: www.aaocalamarion.org.

Requires just a few hours a month to maintain. But the sky's the limit if you're creative and want to do more to enhance the site content and functionality.

If you've got the skills and experience needed, call to learn more. 352-867-0660.

Somebody answer that phone. Please!

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Thousands of calls have come into Intergroup 17 over the years from people seeking a solution as I did. Others have called in deep distress in the middle of the night or at a point of major crisis in their lives as a result of alcoholism. Many of those calls have had a positive result. Many others have not. That's not the point.

The point is that "the hand of AA" was there when someone reached out for help. And answering the phone at Intergroup 17 is one among many ways to take responsibility for meeting our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Intergroup 17 needs volunteers to answer the phone at the office during regular business hours and after-hours for the 24-hour hotline, which can be done from a home or mobile phone. If you have a year or more of sobriety, you can volunteer to serve in this vital role.

Please call or visit Intergroup 17 to learn more about how you can serve in this vital capacity as well as to participate in 12th Step Calls. The number to call is 352-867-0660. Call it today.

**Intergroup Seeks Office Manager
Part-time job. Full-fledged service.**

Intergroup 17 is seeking a qualified individual to serve as office manager, a key supporting role in serving our primary purpose of carrying the message. This is a paid, part-time position and an excellent service opportunity.

Qualified applicants should have approximately two years of sobriety, be highly motivated for service, and have good organizational, interpersonal, and communications skills. Experience in an office or teamwork environment desirable. The following is a summary of the job duties. A more detailed list is available from Intergroup.



- Devote at least 15 hours per week in the Intergroup office
- Establish office procedures; supervise volunteer staff
- Recruit, train, and schedule office and 24-hour hot-line volunteers
- Maintain Intergroup's 12th Step Call volunteer list
- Update and publish Ocala-Marion County *When-and-Where* list
- Assist in coordinating *The Voice* newsletter and Intergroup website
- Maintain the office checking account; ensure that bills are paid
- Manage inventory of AA literature and other for-sale items
- Participate in Intergroup 17 and District 17 meetings and activities

If you want more information, contact Intergroup 17 Steering Committee, 3666-A NE 25th Street, Ocala, FL 34470. Phone: 352-867-0660. Email: ocalaintergroup@msn.com. To apply for this position, please submit a resume or written statement of qualifications in person, by mail, or email.

**In Memoriam
George B**

George B of Summerfield passed away on Monday, June 29, 2009, at the age of 64. George served the fellowship for 32 years, first in Brockton, Massachusetts and then in our area for the past 18 years.

He helped found the Wier Crazy Group in Summerfield and served as GSR and coffee maker at The Cabin in the Woods Group in Ocklawaha.

George was known for his service work, positive attitude, and outstretched hand to all in AA. He is remembered fondly by many in the fellowship.

**Intergroup 17
Inventory Clearance Sale
Hazelden Publications
Available at Cost**



**Savings of up to 40% or More
on Popular Hazelden Titles**

- 12 Step Prayer Book
- 24 Hours a Day
- 52 Weeks of Conscious Contact
- Many more

Selection and discounts limited to current inventory in stock.

Visit the Intergroup office to make your selection.



**InterGroup 17 Meetings
You're invited!**

Open to all. Learn more about AA, InterGroup, and the great opportunities for service work within our local AA community.

Next Meeting
Sunday, August 8, 5:15 pm
St Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Group Representatives
Please send your contact info to:
ocalaintergroup@msn.com or call
352-867-0660. Your support is
greatly appreciated and needed.

**Free Subscription.
The Voice by e-mail.**



For your free monthly subscription, send an e-mail with "Free Voice" in the subject line to:
ocalaintergroup@msn.com

The Voice by e-mail is in PDF format. Requires Adobe Reader software. Free download available at www.adobe.com. Printed copies available at InterGroup office.

**InterGroup 17
Ocala-Marion County
Florida**

3666-A N.E. 25th Street
Ocala, Florida 34470
Phone: 352-867-0660 Fax: 352-867-7819
Email: ocalaintergroup@msn.com

Hours of operation
Monday-Friday 10 am to 5 pm
Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

Website
www.aaocalamarion.org

**24-Hour Hotline
352-867-0660**

**Coming
Events**

**Mark your
calendar**

August 14-16
11th Annual Big
Book on the Beach
St. Pete Beach
Phone: 727- 360-
4754

September 4-7
Tampa Bay Fall
Roundup
Tampa
[www.tampabayfallr
oundup.com](http://www.tampabayfallroundup.com)

September 15
Conscious
Contact Group
4th Anniversary
Celebration
Ocala

November 21
District 17
Gratitude Dinner
St. Mark's
Ocala
**Save the date!
Volunteer
to help!**

INTERGROUP 17, Inc.
3666-A NE 25th Street
Ocala, Florida 34470

