

What's Behind the Steps?

Wake Up. Suit up. Grow up. Show up.

"Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful." [Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book), "Working With Others," p.102.]

Black out. Wake up. Freak out. Make a phone call.

When I called the helpline, a guy told me where the meeting was and I went. I have not had a drink (or a drug) since. I did not know, at the time, that the person who answered the call was staying sober by answering the call. That, as selfish as this may sound, the purpose of 12th Step is as much to stay sober as it is to help someone get sober. He (ultimately HP) saved my life. But possibly this had also saved his.

There is an old story about before Bill met Dr. Bob, he attempted to help many alcoholics. Exasperated at his seeming failure, he complained to his wife that not one of the men he reached out to had stayed sober. She reportedly replied, "I know one man who has stayed sober."

I went to meetings. I got a sponsor. I worked (albeit *slowly*) the steps. I made coffee, I was a group treasurer, secretary, coffee maker, meeting chair . . . I did service.

Eventually, I discovered that the most meaningful type of service for me was reaching out to other struggling alcoholics. Giving back,

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A Group of Principles

The *Twelve and Twelve* describes AA's Twelve Steps as "a group of principles, spiritual in nature, which, if practiced as a way of life can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole" ("Foreward," pg.15). So, in the most basic sense, behind the steps are the spiritual principles of Alcoholics Anonymous.

These spiritual principles such as honesty, acceptance, faith, hope, and love are certainly not unique to AA. They have been guiding forces throughout the history of humankind. The steps are simply a way for us to put these principles into action in our lives or in "all our affairs." Without action, these principles are merely words or concepts. They do not become spiritual until they are practiced.

Certain steps emphasize certain principles more than others. For example, acceptance is a big part of Step 1; willingness and faith for 2 and 3; self-examination and courage for steps 4 and 5. However, the principles of the program are not independent of one another. As we learn and grow, we realize that they are all related; even intertwined. The principles (and the steps) depend upon each other. After all, can we have genuine humility without honesty? Can we have faith without gratitude? Trust without integrity?

These spiritual principles represent perfect ideals, which we as humans will never attain. The program of Alcoholic's Anonymous

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Our Community News

The **Alkathon**, sponsored by Intergroup and held at the Triangle Club this past New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, went off successfully as it has in the past. Meetings were held around the clock, sponsored by several different groups in our recovery community. This event has always proven to be a refuge for beginners as well as seasoned members of A.A. during this holiday. Kudos to all of you who helped in this effort!

The 352-FCYPAA (local organization of Florida Conference of Young People in A.A.) will hold two Valentine's Day fund-raising events this year.

On Friday, February 13th, they'll sponsor a **speaker meeting and a dance** at the Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 4011 NW 34th Street. The speaker meeting will feature CL from St. Augustine, and will begin at 8:00 p.m., with the dance following immediately afterward. A suggested contribution of \$5 is requested for the dance.

And on Saturday, Valentine's Day proper, they're having a **dinner, with cake auction**, followed by a **relationship panel**. This event will start with fellowship at 6:00 p.m., dinner at 7:00, at a location yet to be determined. A suggested donation of \$10 is requested for this. Look for representatives with tickets (and location information) at various meetings between now and then.

Proceeds from both of these events will go toward the group's bid to hold the State-wide FCYPAA convention here in Gainesville.

The **Eye Opener Group** (which meets regularly Monday through Saturday at 7:00 a.m., and Sunday at 8:00 a.m. at the Triangle Club) is sponsoring a series of "**Back to Basics**" meetings to be held at the Triangle Club at 8:15 a.m. on four successive Saturdays, beginning February 7th. These "Back to Basics" meetings are in addition to the group's regular meetings. This is a concept which was popular in the early days of Alcoholics Anonymous. See enclosed flyer for details.

The **44th Annual Gulf Coast Roundup** will take place at the Ramada Beach Resort on Okaloosa Island. Registration can be made at www.gulfcoastroundup.com. Dates are February 14th, 15th and 16th. Registrations forms and further information is available at the Intergroup Office.

The meeting, Our Stories (formerly at 9:00 p.m. Fridays) has ceased to be.

Upcoming Topics in the P.O.S.T.:

March: "*Spring housecleaning . . . Mmmm*"

April: "*Promises do come true, if..*"

May: "*Mayday! Asking for help.*"

Thought for the Day

"Our misfortune has become our good fortune."

--Anonymous

Contributions on these or other topics are welcome and will be printed in the respective issues. Send your articles and letters to post@northcentralflaa.org.

Congratulations!

December (2014) and January (2015) Anniversaries

Bring Your Own Book (BYOB)

M - 5 yrs (Jan)

Downtown Group

EB - 5 yrs (Dec)

Everything or Nothing

JP - 3 yrs (Dec)

KU - 25 yrs (Jan)

Eye Opener

C - 9 yrs (Dec)

CG -- 8 yrs (Dec)

DB - 3 yrs (Dec)

JW - 10 yrs (Dec)

JS - 29 yrs (Jan)

J - 3 yrs (Jan)

L - 1 yr (Jan)

S - 3 yrs (Jan)

Free to Be

A - 7 yrs (Jan)

BA - 8 yrs (Dec)

DN - 8 yrs (Dec)

DW - 23 yrs (Jan)

E - 1 yr (Dec)

K - 20 yrs (Dec)

Gratitude Group

AM - 2 yrs (Jan)

Big D - 32 yrs (Dec)

JF - 1 yr (Jan)

JH - 19 yrs (Jan)

MZ - 10 yrs (Dec)

TC - 7 yrs (Dec)

Happy Birthday

Magic Carpet

DL - 4 yrs (Jan)

WH - 4 yrs (Jan)

The Way Out

BC - 34 yrs (Dec)

Tuesday Night Step Study

PB - 10 yrs (Jan)

RA - 4 yrs (Jan)

RJ - 32 yrs (Jan)

Wholesale Miracle

B - 25 yrs (Dec)

Women's Step Study

DC - 2 yrs (Dec)

JM - 32 yrs (Jan)

SC - 31 yrs (Jan)

SS - 34 yrs (Dec)

February Anniversaries? Send them by February 15th to: post@northcentralflaa.org

Wake Up . . . Show Up

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face to face or phone to phone, what was freely given is the essence of Step 12.

Little things like staying for the "meeting after the meeting" or big things like going out on a 12 Step call gave me hope and made me realize the power of, and sometimes the fragility of, sobriety. I learned that it is an honor and a privilege to work with others, formally as a sponsor, or informally at coffee after the meeting. Listening to myself repeat the words that I have heard, and maybe need to hear in that moment, never fails to fill me with gratitude. It's what I am supposed to do, and I have learned that when I do what I am supposed to do, I am at peace.

"Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."
BB, Into Action, p.77.

~ Anonymous

North Central Florida Intergroup Minutes December 28, 2014

The meeting opened at 1:00 p.m. with the Serenity Prayer.

Attendance: AG, Every Step We Take; BK, Free To Be; B, A Vision For You; BM, Eye Opener; CH, By The Book; CH, Solutions Group; FS, Bring Your Own Book, IG Treasurer; HB, Young Peoples Group; JM, IG Office Manger; JS, HALT; JV, New Freedom; KC, 4th Dimension; LD, Tuesday Night Step Study; MV, Promises; EM, Good Morning God; PM, IG Secretary; PC. Gratitude; RG, Unity/TILIS; RM, Geezers; SR, IG Chair, Sat Morning 10th & 11th Step Study.

Next the **Treasurer's Report** was read. A motion to accept was made by JV and seconded by LD. The motion passed.

The **Secretary's Report** was read and a motion was made by FS to accept, seconded by BK. The motion passed.

Phone Committee: B reported an opening on the Hot Line, Sat 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. Volunteers are always needed. The Alt Chair of the committee has returned and rejoined the group.

P.O.S.T.: Due to some personnel problems, the December P.O.S.T. was published in an abbreviated form. The problem has been resolved and future editions should be back to normal. There is a need for volunteers knowledgeable in Word and computers to help with the publishing of the P.O.S.T.

Literature and Merchandise: At present there are no soft covered copies of the 24 Hour a Day book. They will be in stock next month.

Where and When: A new one has been published and is back to the original format. B commented on the change saying he liked it better as it was less confusing.

Activities: The Alkathon at the Triangle Club is starting on Dec 31st at 12 noon and continues to Jan 1st at noon. There will be a New Year's Eve dance at the club starting at 9:30pm and ending at 12:15am. Everyone is welcome! The YPG and 352-FCYPAA groups are hosting a Valentine's panel meeting, dinner and dance. The details will be published at a later date. It is in the planning stages now. On Jan 10th a memorial for SB will be held at Hyde Park Methodist Church, 500 Platt Street in Tampa from 10am to 4pm.

There being no Old Business nor New Business to conduct, BK made a motion to adjourn, seconded by LD. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:24 p.m. with the Responsibility Pledge.



"Each day I turn my ongoing spiritual experience into a sane and happy usefulness among my fellow travelers."

~"It's Showtime!"

Nome, AK, June 2009

From the Grapevine Book *Spiritual Awakenings II*

The Magic Carpet Meeting

a Grapevine-based meeting

6:30 p.m. Tuesday – Room 204

Trinity United Methodist Church

For more information: Grapevine@AAAnflDistrict14.org

Overheard at Area Assembly

"The *Grapevine/La Vina* is a Gift of hearts, pains, joys and opinions."

"The *Grapevine/La Vina* is a Gift of another handhold on sobriety."

"The *Grapevine/La Vina* is a Gift by passing it on to newcomers and people early in recovery."

"The *Grapevine/La Vina* is a Gift of real-time AA experience, strength and hope; a printed embodiment of one alcoholic sharing their recovery with another."

A Group of Principles

(Continued from page 1)

understands this. In more practical terms the principles represent goals for which to strive through continued action. The steps provide instructions on what to do when we fall short, and we will. All the promises of the program really do come true when we practice these principles, as learned through the steps, in "all our affairs."

Everyone Has One

First Impressions and Defects of Character

In my work life, I have always thought that I was very good with people. This belief has been validated by coworkers and bosses. Not so much in my personal life. Since I have been in the program, I am trying to suspend judgment of others and to be genuine with those with whom I share this disease regardless of first impressions. I will always be a work in progress, though through prayer, meditation, and work with my sponsor, I can see progress.

So, what is happening when I see someone at a meeting and have an immediate and negative reaction? Why do I not like this person on sight?

Sometimes I justify it based on something about the person. Recently, I heard another alcoholic say that she did not like some people because of the way she felt when around them. Wow! Can my feelings about another person come from some ancient feelings of mine generated by defects of character and have nothing to do with the other person? If this is true and I now think it is, some new work is cut out for me. I thank God and my fellow alcoholic.

District 14

DCM* Corner

First of all, I would like to thank all the past GSRs, committee chairs, and officers for their service the last two years! It's been a pleasure working with you all. And I would like to welcome all the new GSRs, committee chairs, and officers to what I'm sure will be a very productive two years of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

We had a great turnout for the Area Assembly January 9th-11th, and great participation at the District meeting January 14th. Don't forget that the Area Assembly is here in Gainesville the next two years!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

GN., DCM for District 14, (352) 283-2648

*DCM: The District Committee Member is the link between GSRs and the Area Delegate, and serves as Chairperson for District business meetings. Want to know more? Ask your sponsor.

District Service Committee Meetings

District 14 Business Meeting

Second Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
1521 NW 34th Street

Grapevine

Second Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.

Trinity United Methodist Church, Room 204
4000 NW 53rd Avenue

CPC/PI

First Thursday, 6:00 p.m., Triangle Club

Literature

Second Monday, 6:30 p.m., Intergroup Office

Archives

First Tuesday, 7:00 p.m., Triangle Club

Phones (NCFI Committee)

Second Tuesday, 5:00 p.m., Intergroup Office

Corrections

Third Tuesday, 5:30 p.m.
Triangle Club, Board Room

Treatment

First Monday, 6:30 p.m., Triangle Club

Visit the District 14 website at www.aanfldistrict14.org for more information.

7th Tradition Addresses



Self-support: Where money and spirituality mix.

North Central Florida Intergroup

2632 NW 43rd Street, Suite 1182
Gainesville, FL 32606-7551
[Checks payable to: NCFI]

North Florida Area Assembly

P.O. Box 291634
Port Orange, FL 32129-1634
[Checks payable to NFAC]

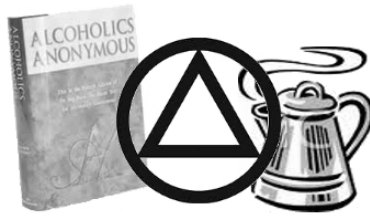
District 14

P.O. Box 357254
Gainesville, FL 32635-7254
[Checks payable to District 14]

General Services Office

P.O. Box 459, Grand Central
Station, NY, NY 10163
[Checks payable to GSO]

NCFI



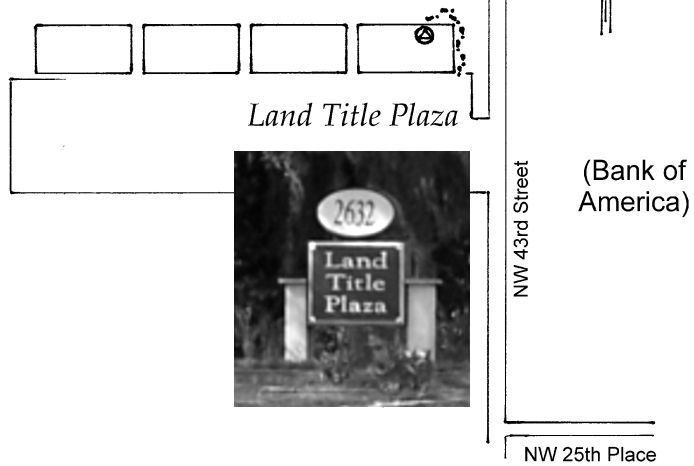
North Central Florida INTERGROUP

Our office is located in
Land Title Plaza

2632 NW 43rd Street, Suite 1182
 (Same office. New number on the door.)
 Gainesville, FL 32606-7551
 Telephone: 352-372-8091

Our office hours are:
 Monday - Friday: 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.
 Saturday: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 Sunday: Closed

Walk around the **BACK**
 of the building
 nearest the street.



Meetings schedule

The *Where and When* is available at our office, and online at our website: www.northcentralflaa.org/wandw.html

P.O.S.T. Submissions

Send articles and anniversaries to: post@northcentralflaa.org or mail them to the NCFI office.

To add, change, or delete meetings listings, please use "*Meetings Change Form*," also available at our office, and online at www.northcentralflaa.org/mtg-change/mtg-change-form-options.html, or follow the link from the Intergroup home page: www.northcentralflaa.org.

Our next monthly meeting will be held on the last Sunday of the month, February 28th at 1:00 PM, in Schaffer Hall, 2505 NE 9th Street

The P.O.S.T. (and more) in Cyberspace

The *Power of Sober Thinking* can now be found online. You can find the current and past issues (back to January of 2014) at <http://www.northcentralflaa.org/d.post/post.html>.

Our home-page, <http://www.northcentralflaa.org>, has links to the *Where and When* (our schedule of meetings), notices of special events, and more.