



Nature Coast Journal



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Grapevine—October 1994

Lock Me Up, Please

At a meeting recently, a woman raised her hand and said that she'd gotten drunk the previous evening because of problems with her husband. Probably she believed that marital problems caused her to drink, but I saw her situation differently.

I've been blessed with several years of sobriety, and in that time I've seen hundreds of slips. I don't think anyone relapses over their spouses, jobs, kids, or financial problems, although a lot of folks say that's why they drank. My opinion is that if I ever drink again it will be over one thing, and one thing only: undertreated alcoholism. The following story may illustrate my point.

When I was about two years sober, I was suddenly seized one night with the compulsion to drink. My program was in good shape, and there was no life crisis that might have made a drink more tempting than usual. The disease had simply reared its ugly head.

All the AA meetings in the area were over for that night, so in desperation I called my sponsor. I told him that the compulsion was so strong I didn't believe I could remain sober for the night. He assured me that if I promised to do three things, I would not drink.

"First," he said, "get down on your knees and pray for fifteen minutes for the compulsion to leave. Can you do that?" I told him I could. But I was shocked at what else he proposed that I do.

"Second, if at the end of that time you still want to drink, simply go quickly to the local police station, tell them you're an alcoholic in grave danger of drinking, and ask them to please lock you up for the next twenty-four hours."

My jaw dropped. I could hardly wait to hear suggestion number three.

"Third, if for some reason they tell you they can't do that, simply start breaking windows there in the station so that they have to arrest you." I was speechless. This sounded like insanity (a condition I liked to

think I had left behind), but I was desperate. After checking several times to make sure he was serious, I promised I would do as he suggested.

I dropped to my knees and prayed for the compulsion to be expelled. I tried to force out those intrusive thoughts of confessing my desperation to the same police who had arrested me in drunken stupors in days past. My face burned, anticipating the humiliation I would feel in having to ask for their help. My fears were groundless. At the end of the appointed time, I raised my head in relief: the compulsion was gone. My Higher Power did not fail me.

I've told that story often, and sometimes have been asked if I actually would have followed through. My answer is yes—if prayer had not relieved the desire, I would have. It may not have been a conventional AA-approved method of staying sober, but it would have worked. If I had placed myself in a situation where it was physically impossible to drink, then my sobriety would have been guaranteed. I discovered that "going to any length" means just that. It does not rule out actions that are difficult, inconvenient, embarrassing, or unorthodox.

I also realized that I never have to drink again. I am not one of the unfortunates who are constitutionally incapable of the action this program requires. This does not mean I will ever be immune. But I do believe that my Higher Power will never back me into a corner where

I have no choice but to drink. He will always provide me with some resource, some action I can take, to prevent that drink from occurring.

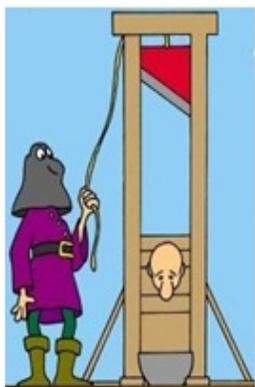
Fear and pride must be overcome, as they may get in the way of using the help that is sent. If I give in to them and say, "This is too hard" or "That is too extreme," my relapse is inevitable. If I have the willingness to go to any length, my sobriety is assured.

So if the day comes that I do drink again, it will not be because I had no alternative. It will be because I had an alternative, provided by a loving God, but was unwilling to use it.

Mike D.
Syracuse, New York



Where & When now available on our website in 8.5x11 format.



An alcoholic, a murderer and a thief were due to be executed in France. As you know they use the Guillotine and chop off your head. One of the rules is that if for some reason the blade does not cut your head off you are set free as this is seen as a miracle. The murderer

put his head in and the blade came down stopping an inch from the back of his neck. The crowd cried, "it's a miracle", and the murderer was released. The thief put his head in and wouldn't you know the same thing happened. "Another miracle the crowd cried" again and he was set free. Now the executioner looked at the alcoholic and said, "it is your turn". The alcoholic replied, "your not going to get me in that thing until you fix it!"

The Company You Keep

It was early one September 'Bout as near as I remember I was walk-in down the lane in tipsy pride.

Not a syllable did I utter, as I lay down in the gutter and a pig came up and lay down by my side.

Not a soul was we disturbin' as we lay there by the curbin' Til I heard this high-tone lady stop and say, "You can tell someone who boozes, by the company he chooses." and the pig got up and slowly walked away.

A thousand eyes, but none with correct vision.

--Isacher Hurwitz

William Shakespeare referred to envy as the "green sickness." There are only losers in the game of envy. When we envy someone else, we have judged ourselves and found something lacking.

Lack of self-love is the soil in which envy grows. Envious people are never satisfied. Self-pity is never sitting far from envy. We feel sorry for ourselves for what we don't have. Self-pity is like a swamp, the longer we stand in the muck, the more we stink.

Concentrating on what we do have is the perfect antidote for envy. Every one of us has our own special gifts and talents. We find these by looking at ourselves instead of looking at others. By becoming grateful for what we have, we can rejoice in ourselves.

Today let me be grateful for what I have.

*Our Best Days by Nancy Hull-Mast
Printed with permission*

The committee for a sober club meets 2nd and 4th Saturday at 5pm at the First United Methodist Church. See the address below. All are welcome to help.

Gratitude Dinner Committee Meeting

Saturday Oct 16th at 7:15
First United Methodist Church
3896 S Pleasant Grove Rd
Inverness (Across the street
from the Resentment Meeting)

Obituary for Sept

*The following member has left us
to chair the Big Meeting in
Heaven:*

In Loving Memory
Antoinette "Toni" M.

Passed September 2, 2010
with 30 years of Sobriety.

She will certainly be missed.

Area Events

Details on our web site

Area Assemblies 2010 October 22-24

Paramount Resort and
Conference Center
Gainesville, FL
Hotel: **352-377-4000**
30 day cut-off at the hotel.
Make reservations early.
Info: **877-992-9229**

*September 3-6, 2010
24th Tampa Bay
Fall Roundup*

*November 7, 2010
NCI Gratitude Dinner*

*November 5,6,7 2010
Ancient City
Gratitude Weekend
St. Augustine, FL*

*November 26-28
20th Gratitude Round-Up
Diamondhead, MS*

*December 3-5, 2010
23rd Men's Retreat
CANCELLED*

*Feb 10-13, 2011
47th International
Women's Conference
Anchorage, Alaska*

*Ancient City Unity Roundup
May 27,28,29,30, 2010
St Augustine, FL*

MEETING CHANGES

NEW:

KEEP IT GREEN (OBSD)
Beginners—9:00 PM—Oct 1
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
439 E. Norvell-Bryant Hwy 486
Hernando

FREEDOM HOUSE GROUP
Tuesday's 8 PM
5008 Stokes Ferry Rd
Arrow Head, Hernando

CANCELLED:

Both Inverness Friday Night 6:30
& 8 Meetings Canceled for Oct
15th and Dec 3rd

Women's House of Power
Meeting Cancelled

Hernando Men's Meeting
Meeting Cancelled

Sponsored by Nature Coast Intergroup

2010 Gratitude Dinner

Chicken, with Covered Dishes & Desserts

November 7, 2010

Donation: \$3.00
NO Tickets sold at the door

Our Lady of Fatima
Church Hall
550 US Highway 41 S
Inverness.

Speaker: TBA

Doors Open: 4pm, Dinner: 5pm, Speaker to follow

Letter to the Editor:

Opinions are that of the writer and not of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Editor, Nature Coast Journal or Nature Coast Intergroup.

Dear Editor,

Today, as I see it, many new alcoholics are coming to AA. The problem is, fewer are staying sober than there were in years past. The success rate today, as I see it, is terrible and the reasons can be traced to a few things that we are not doing so well anymore. We need to return to our roots. Let's start speaking up when we hear a lead that is 45 minutes of Demerol and Cocaine and let's not make encouraging comment of "what a great story that was." Stop worrying so much about hurting anyone's feelings. Why abandon our ideas and beliefs so that we may not lose someone that may not even be an alcoholic. We need to remember that AA is a fellowship, for alcoholics with a booze problem who WANT to stay sober and not for those that may need to. Adhere to our primary purpose, and not give in to the treatment center mentality that all addictions are the same. "A drug is a drug, and alcohol is just another drug." Maybe so, but we must remember that alcohol is the ONLY one that AA deals with and the only one we in AA know anything about.

What about the new suffering alcoholic in the back row who came for help with his booze problem and doesn't hear the AA message? He may wander off to drink again or maybe to die.

Get back to service not just showing up at meetings. "I think the kind of service that really counts is giving yourself to others", Dr Bob said, and that requires effort and time. It isn't a matter of just putting money in the basket. That kind of giving will not keep anybody sober. But

giving of yourself and your time is a different matter.

Let's get back to AA's 12 Step work as it originally was. Is there anything about staying sober that is more important? Treatment centers are taking over the initial 12 Step work in a lot of cases. The hopeless alcoholics are coming home and are we ready and willing to receive them? Are we ready and willing to help the wet drunk that wants to get sober but can't go to a treatment center?

We must in my opinion return to strong sponsorship that worries not about the individual's needs but the individual's sobriety

We must in my opinion return to strong sponsorship that worries not about the individual's needs but the individual's sobriety. We need to teach what AA is all about and not just the Steps. Let's show that being a member of AA means live to higher standards. Let's have respect at meeting. Don't wander around. Don't talk in the background, or carry a cell phone or pager so they are distractive.

Teach the Big Book, not psychobabble. Let's have AA meetings and not group therapy. It is about one drunk talking to another at a level that we all can understand. Return to the realization that we cannot help with money, marriage, jobs, health or legal issues. We are here for alcoholism and that is our primary purpose.

When one drunk reaches out for help I am responsible. Will AA even exist at all in the future? Will each of us do our small part to insure that it will? As I look at our current AA in 2010 I don't know.

Pete

CONDITIONAL RECOVERY - "Steering clear of emotional entanglements"

Another caution: Tying our sobriety to someone we are emotionally involved with proves flatly disastrous. "I'll stay sober if so-and-so does this or that" puts an unhealthy condition on our recovery. We have to stay sober for ourselves, no matter what other people do or fail to do.

We should remember, too, that intense dislike also is an emotional entanglement, often a reversal of past love. We need to cool any overboard feeling, lest it flip us back into the drink. 1998, AAWS, Inc., *Living Sober*, pages 61-62

ANNIVERSARIES:

Deadline for submissions is the Thursday following Intergroup meeting

Floral City Group
 Marion 2

Floral City Men's Group
 Rich U 17
 Montana 15
 Richard G 14

High Noon Group
 Ken S 32
 Rita Marie 30
 Kim C 7
 Tom M 6
 Pam T 6
 Jerry 5
 Cheryl S 3

Holder Way of Life Group
 Brian W 17

Last Chance Group
 Beverly H 34
 Paige B 23

Inverness Monday Night Group
 Paula 5

Rainbow Group
 Bob F 30
 Bruce P 27
 Gail K 24
 Helen S 21
 Billy D 2

Sober Sand Gnats Group
 John L 23
 Ginny M 1

Woman's Friendship Group
 Rose Ann N 33
 Carol S 7
 Mary B 6
 Paula D 6
 Beverly S 2

Contributions

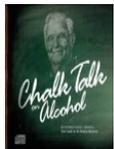
	YTD	Sept
ABC Group	\$30.00	
Attitude Adjustment Gp	\$50.00	\$50.00
Bright Spot		
Big Book 164	\$134.00	
Crystal River Group	\$190.00	
Crystal River BB	\$100.00	\$100.00
Dunnellen Group	\$25.00	
Floral City Men's Group	\$50.00	
Hemando's Mens	\$50.00	\$50.00
High Noon Group	\$100.00	
Holder Way of Life Gp	\$200.00	
Inverness Monday Night	\$150.00	
Inverness Friday Night	\$160.00	
Inverness Wed Night	\$20.00	
It's In The Book	\$25.00	
Keep In Step	\$40.00	
Last Chance Gp	\$77.95	
Monday Night Men's	\$50.00	\$50.00
Never To Early Group	\$50.00	
New Beginnings-Dunn	\$25.00	
Night Cap		
No Name Group		
Rainbow Group	\$266.97	
Share At Noon	\$150.00	
Sober Sand Nats	\$233.87	\$33.87
What The Book Says	\$45.00	
Won Rebos	\$187.50	
Women's Friendship Gp	\$200.00	\$100.00
Women to Women		
Women's N-Beginnings	\$50.00	
Women's House Power		
Yana	\$114.31	
Monthly Totals	\$2,774.60	\$383.87

INTERGROUP OFFICE/BOOKSTORE

111 W. MAIN ST.
 RM 305
 INVERNESS, FL 34450
352-344-0290

OPEN: MON, WED, FRI 10AM-4PM SAT CLOSED

Store volunteers: Denis-High Noon Group, John W-Big Book 164, Darral M-Floral City Men's, Rich G-Keep in Step, Carol M-Attitude Adjustment, Doc, Floral City Tuesday-Janet B, Attitude Adjustment-Debbie, Floral City Tuesday



New to the Bookstore:

Audio Lending Library

In addition to cassettes, we have many CD's to include:

Complete Set of Father Joseph Martin (Chalk Talk)
 10-CD sets of Joe and Charlie-Big Book
 Convention speakers including Florida

Stop in and browse through our selection.

THEY ARE FREE TO CHECK OUT

Intergroup Hotline Report

Hotline Report:

Total Calls	142
AA	114
General Inquiries	7
Alanon	14
Detox	3
Rides	5

If you would like to be a volunteer for the 12 Step List just call the Hotline number and give them your information. Groups can download a signup sheet from the web site and pass it around at meetings.

The following groups were represented at the Intergroup meeting.

Monday Night Men's Step, Rainbow Group, Yana Group, Attitude Adjustment, BB164, Bright Spot Group, Dunnellon Group, Floral City Group, Floral City Men's, Inverness Friday Night Group, Sober Sand Gnats, Women's Friendship Group

If your representative is not listed then your group was not represented.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL GROUPS: The Gratitude Dinner Committee, like last year, is asking each group to make a Door Prize donation consisting of gift certificates, Grapevine subscriptions, books, and other items that do not exceed \$25 in value. This helps keep the cost of the dinner down. Last year this was a big success. - Thanks, John L, Chairman

BUSINESS MEETING

LAST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH 4:30PM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER IN HOLDER.

DISTRICT 28

MONTHLY MEETING TO FOLLOW INTERGROUP

INTERGROUP

OFFICERS

CHAIR—AL L
 352-586-0800

VICE CHAIR—BEVERLY H.

352-344-5939

SECT—JULIE P

TREAS—JOHN L

INTERGROUP TRUSTEES

ROCK P—JOHN W

SANDY H—OPEN

HOTLINE

ROCK

(352) 621-0599

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ASSIST—BEVERLY H

344-5939

DISTRICT 28

OFFICERS

DCM—SUE ANN A

ALT DCM—HANS N

SECT—PAT H

TREAS—PAULA D

JOURNALS FOR GROUPS

CAN BE PICKED UP AT:

BOOKSTORE

EAST COUNTY

FRIDAY BEGINNER'S

MEETING 6:30 PM

WEST COUNTY

SERENITY CLUB

JOURNAL IS ALSO

POSTED ON WEBSITE

www.ncintergroup.com

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