



Sara-Mana Intergroup

P.O. BOX 3075

1748 Independence Blvd., #B2, Sarasota, FL 34234



APRIL 2012

Central Office (941)351-4818

SARA-MANA DISTRICT 4, AREA 15

Your Public Information Committee

"Public Information (P.I.) in Alcoholics Anonymous means carrying the message of recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic by informing the general public about the A.A. program. We carry the message by getting in touch with and responding to the media, schools, industry, and other organizations which can report on the nature and purpose of A.A. and what it can do for alcoholics." Public Information Workbook.

Your PI Committee is very active in our community reaching out to universities, secondary schools, businesses, health care facilities, correctional institutions in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. We are a completely open Fellowship and provide information to all about what AA does and what it does not do. We want all who suffer from this malady either directly or indirectly, to have the opportunity to learn that AA offers a solution for the alcoholic who still suffers. This is our primary purpose. Our local PI Committee carries the AA message and provides information directly to professionals and institutions located in Sarasota and Manatee counties. If you would like to participate in this exciting work, please join us.

We meet the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM, at our Central Office (rear door), or contact our PI/CPC Chair Joan F. at picpc@aasrq.org.



Gratitude Room—Bradenton
1819 5th St. West—off 17th Ave.

Intergroup in Sarasota Got Me Sober

An Old Timer Remembers the Early Days

By Chuck H

I got sober in July of 1983. Without question, it was the best thing that ever happened to me. My first meetings were all over Sarasota and Bradenton, and one was way out in the boonies on Bee Ridge and Cattlemen. Both roads were two lanes in those days. That is where I met my sponsor Gordon B. He was hard to miss. He was 6 foot 4 and wore the loudest pair of golf pants I ever saw.

My first years of sobriety were good: a bit rocky and sometimes turbulent and often very emotional. I learned how to work the steps, deal with resentments, and stayed sober through life's difficulties- like working for a living. An important part of my recovery was service work. Gordon encouraged me to get involved in the Intergroup Central Office. The office was on a muddy tract near the airport.

Gordon was Treasurer and advised me to handle the Hotline which suited me just fine. I learned about "front line AA" answering the phones. We had people with problems, snowbirds looking for meetings, and spouses wanting to get their husbands sober. On Saturday mornings we got the "hangover calls." It was the good time to talk to people who were feeling lousy and hopeless. Sometimes we would get a "12 stepper" -call them back and sometimes get them to a meeting.

My involvement in Intergroup may be the reason I am sober today. I have worked at Intergroup Offices in Albuquerque, and Savannah, Georgia, where I now live. I am writing this while sitting in the Savannah Intergroup Office. Service work just may be the thread that has kept me sober all these years.

Chuck H lives in Savannah, Georgia and Gordon B is still his sponsor

Making Decisions in Early Sobriety

by Mika B

Don't do it! Don't make any decisions in early sobriety. At least that's what I was told when I came in.

Since then, with just over one year of sobriety, I've made plenty of decisions- big ones, small ones, important and seemingly unimportant ones. I made a very tough decision early-on to get a divorce. I knew I could never recover staying in a toxic relationship. So I knew it was the right decision, and I have no regrets about it. Most of the other decisions I have to make are pretty simple or so it seems.

Today I have a God to turn to when I have a problem. I also have a sponsor who helps me through the process. I have stopped reacting and I am starting to listen which is something new for me.

Now when I hear the Promises, there is one part that jumps out at me, "We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us." I think I am beginning to understand.

Central Office Fund Drive

Thanks to the great participation of our members we have finally received over \$20,000 in contributions. We have the goal line in sight, \$25,000. Give from the heart and send your contributions to Central Office.

Jail Meetings Keep Me Sober by Ron W.

Over the years my sponsors and other A.A.'s have said service helps keep you sober. I've done many different kinds of service during my years of sobriety. When Carol C. came and asked for volunteers to go into the jail and hold a meeting I got the paper work and sent it in. I attended an orientation that explains what you can and can't do when you go into the jail.

I went to my first Jail Meeting. The last time I was in a jail was in Wyoming was in 1978 and I was drunk. My faculties are better now. Here is how it works.

The desk officer gives you a visitor's badge, remember no cell phones, one car key only, nothing else. A door buzzes, you go through and the door slams, that way they know it locks. One more door to go through, then you are in a hallway with two elevators. You go up to the 5th floor, through two more slamming doors and you're in the Pod. There are about 40 men in the Pod. Some are Alcoholics, some are duel and some are addicts.

I didn't like my first three meetings. I wondered if these guys were serious or was it just a big con. By watching them and listening some of them are serious and some aren't. Just like a normal meeting. Then I remembered: I was there for me not them, just like a normal meeting.

Cont. next col

Heard in a Meeting

I used to have big problems now I have little problems. When I was drinking I could find my keys but, I couldn't find my car. Now that I am sober I can find my car but I can't remember where I left my keys

Continued

The meetings are conducted just like any other meeting. Starting with the Preamble, How It Works, The Promises and The Daily Reading, then we have a discussion. On Sunday night, if there are at least two of us, I take one group into the Basketball Rec Room and we do Steps 1, 2, 3. Terry and John are usually there and they do Steps 4 thru 12.

I finally got used to going in to the jail. I got to know some of the guys and like them. I also found out that my regular meeting had started to take on a new and better meaning to me. I don't know who gets what we are saying, but I know it helps me and that's the main point. So if you pass everything and get to go in, relax, don't worry it's good for you.

For information on the Men's Pod contact Bob B. at 993-9611 or rpb51@comcast.net . For information on the Women's Pod contact Carol K. at 362-0826 or cdkruse70@yahoo.com



"In that moment of clarity, Joe was able to see a different future...thanks Humble Hare!"

Letting Go of Resentment, Anger & Bitterness

"When you let go of things, they let go of you." by Jane P.

When you harbor resentment, anger or bitterness, the person you end up harming the most is yourself. Negative emotions have a way of creating negative energy that destroys positive emotions, like generosity, love and joy. Although the unhappy situation may be long gone, you may be allowing it to hold you back by holding onto the feelings it evoked.

Today, vow to start "cleaning out" that inner vault of negativism. Try to forgive those who've caused you previous pain, and if you can't forgive, at least learn to forget.

Break free! Let go! Move forward with optimism. It's the best way to find happiness.

Daily Reflections on www.aa.org

Dear Friends,

I am very pleased to introduce the availability of a Daily Reflections page on the aa.org web site in all three languages. This page will update daily, so visitors can share in the reading for that calendar day. It is hoped that you will find this access inviting and easy to use for daily reading.

The new page can be reached by clicking on the "Daily Reflections" link on the upper left corner of our home page at www.aa.org.

All best wishes,

Phyllis H, General Manager, General Service Office USA/ Canada, New York Office

Calls to the Helpline

March 2012

Total Calls	240
Meeting/Time/Location	156
In Lieu of 12th Step Call	0
Actual 12 Step Call	12
Al-Anon Call	13
Special Needs	0
Miscellaneous	59
Spanish Line	0

Thought for the Day

"Every resentment is based on one of my character defects"

Coming Events

Founder's Day Dinner

June 9th

Delegates Breakfast

June 30th

Contact Central Office

My Gratitude List

A Solution

Whenever I am feeling out of sorts or unhappy about something, I call my sponsor to complain and the answer is always the same: "Seems like you are lacking gratitude in your life." I hate it when he says that. When I hear that I know it is time to humble myself and hold a 2-minute gratitude session. I simply sit or kneel, with no distractions, close my eyes, and think about what I'm grateful for and who I'm grateful for. Sometimes that doesn't work right away so I have to go to the trenches and make my Ungrateful List: All those things good things that I have in my life that I am not grateful for. That seems to jump start my attitude on those tough days.

I don't do it every day, but let me tell you, on the days I do it, it makes me very happy.

Why should the simple act of thinking about who and what I'm grateful for make such a big difference in my life? I don't know, but it works for me.

Anonymous in Sarasota

STEP FOUR



"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

"THE UNHAPPIEST person in the world is the chronic Alcoholic who has an insistent yearning to enjoy life as he once knew it, but cannot picture life without alcohol.. He has a HEART-BREAKING OBSESSION that by some miracle of control he will be able to do so."

AA Cleveland, Ohio

New Meetings

SRO Gratitude Club

"Guided Meditation"

3 and 6:45 PM Daily

Ellenton United Methodist

Church

"Steps & Traditions"

3607 Hwy 301

Monday 5-9 pm

Anniversary Meeting Main Street Men's Group

911 Central St. Sarasota, FL

Sat. 4/28/12 **Speaker Meeting 10 am **Barbecue 11 am

Open to Men, Women, and Families

3 for April

STEP 4

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

TRADITION 4

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

CONCEPT 4

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Dear Alkie

"Alkie," one of our long time members, believes as the Big Book say, "...that we are not a glum lot."

Dear Alkie: I'm new, and have heard it said that AA is alike everywhere. True?

Alkie: AA meetings everywhere contain the same nuts- they are just in different cans.

Dear Alkie: When I drink, the world seems brighter than my dull existence, but it doesn't last, and I often end up in trouble. What can AA do?

Alkie: AA changed my life, not just my perception of it!

Dear Alkie: I think I'm getting better. Do I still need to attend meetings?

Alkie: When you don't feel good you need a meeting; when you do feel good the meeting needs you.

Dear Alkie: I'm brand new. What can I expect from other alcoholics?

Alkie: Other alcoholics in the rooms are my spiritual and emotional barometer. When you look good, I know I am; when you are jerks and jackasses, I know I am.

Our Newsletter Depends Upon You!

Share your experience, strength, and hope with the Fellowship.

E-mail your article to
Newsletter@aa.org

HAPPY A.A. BIRTHDAYS!!

(Groups: Put **ANNIVERSARIES** in the email subject line and send birthday announcements for the most recent month to newsletter@aaqrq.org no later than the last day of the month.)

BAY GROUP

March

Bill W. 38 years
Jean W. 31 years
Paul N. 5 years
Linda R. 3 years

DONUT HOUR

March

Liz M. 17 years
Carly C. 6 years
Jill A. 2 years
David I. 1 year
Chris M. 1 year
Tracy R. 1 year

EARLY BIRD GROUP

January

Carol H. 21 years
Larry B. 3 years

March

Tim L. 19 years
Nikki D. 6 years

FRIENDS OF THE PELICAN

March

Bob C. 32 years
Norris E. 23 years
Terry H. 15 years
Kathleen W. 7 years
Viola W. 6 years
Peggy P. 4 years
Tonne N. 1 year

GULFGATE NOON

March

Sylvia P. 40 years
Edgar C. 26 years
Kim G. 1 year

HAPPY COOKIE HOUR

March

Jaci M. 9 years
Thom B. 5 years
Danni 2 years
Connie G. 2 years

LAKEWOOD RANCH

12X12

March

Marty K. 12 years

LUNCH BUNCH

March

Toni J. 29 years
Mark E. 25 years
Bill M. 24 years
Phyllis D. 22 years
Grinch 14 years
Trish M. 10 years
Jill L. 2 years
Jason R. 2 years
Kathy C. 1 year
Joseph D. 1 year

NEW WOMEN'S GROUP

March

Betty C. 37 years
Cathy E. 36 years
Judy Y. 29 years
Kathleen W. 7 years

NORTH RIVER MON NIGHT

February

Carmen Di 35 years

March

Hedy H. 34 years
Rick M. 10 years
Donna H. 2 years

OAKSTREET

March

Jane D. 44 years
Cynthia C. 32 years
Michael F. 30 years
Judy Y. 20 years
Kathy J. 17 years
Annette W. 12 years
Johannes V. 11 years
Joan B. 8 years
Gulie P. 5 years
Linda R. 3 years

ST. ARMANDS

March

Bert C. 45 years

Jane D. 44 years
BJ 23 years
Marna 13 years
Janet B. 13 years
Salena. 5 years
Theresa C. 4 years

SERENITY GROUP

March

Nancy D. 22 years
Diane C. 10 years
Steve R. 1 year

SINGLENESS OF PURPOSE

March

Ray C. 37 years
Darryl P. 23 years
Cathy V. 7 years
Barry D. 3 years

SUNRISE

March

John M. 25 years
Tim L. 19 years
Lou C. 18 years
Mary P. 12 years
Leslie F. 6 years
Fred H. 2 years
Robin H. 1 year
Dick S. 1 year

UNDER THE RAINBOW

March

Karen O. 37 years
Joy G. 11 years
Thom B. 5 years
John W. 5 years

GRATEFUL I DIDN'T GIVE UP BEFORE THE MIRACLE HAPPENED

Albert Einstein once said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." Pre-recovery, the word miracle was not a part of my vocabulary. I existed as a victim, awash in shame and

humiliation. I merely coasted. I was a master at self-fulfilling prophecies and self-defeating behavior. Devoid of dignity and self respect, I was driven by fear. I was so petrified at how awful I might be that I fled any opportunity to introspect. Rather than take ownership of counter-productive actions and behaviors which planted me firmly in the life I was living, I blamed everyone and anyone. Today, it seems like the miracles keep coming.

I continue to experience amazement and disbelief over the quality of my current life. Granted, it is far from perfect. In fact, I have never before been so satisfied by so little. I realize that I derive satisfaction out of a job well done, taking care of myself and being accountable. Today, my family loves me, I have true friends and a solid job where I contribute. I actually like who I am, a woman of integrity. Recovery has transformed my world.

This program has provided me with solid guidelines for living. It is a simple program. I have a sponsor, I work the steps, I do service work, I attend meetings, I have a relationship with a higher power of my understanding and I actively communicate with other AA members. I listen. I keep coming back, take what I need and leave the rest. I understand that I'm not given more than I can handle and if I'm brought to it, I'll get through it. I have nothing to fear but fear itself. I do my best to get out of the problem and into the solution. I can honestly say, it works if you work it. I work it and I'm worth it!

--Dana D.

I searched for the enemy that I could not see, when I looked in the mirror the enemy was me.
--Anonymous

HOW TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER: Anniversaries, articles, and meeting notices may be sent to newsletter@aaqrq.org. Submit material as attachments or placed directly into an email. Include your first name, group, and type of item being sent. **Deadlines: The last day of the month is the absolute deadline for all materials submitted for consideration.** Submissions may be edited for length or content. The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of AA, Sara-Mana Intergruop, or the Central Office, which is located at 1748 Independence Blvd., #B2, Sarasota, FL 34234. Email: newsletter@aaqrq.org phone: (941) 351-4818 website: aaqrq.org