



Sara-Mana Intergroup

P.O. BOX 3075

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

God
grant me the
serenity to accept
the things I cannot
change, courage to
change the things I
can and the wisdom
to know the differ-
ence.

September 2012

Central Office (941-351-4818)

Sara-Mana District 4, Area 15

We never quit learning in A.A.

By Larry D.

At a recent Big Book meeting, we discussed the chapter "On Wives." This is not my favorite reading; however, a phrase brought home what Alcoholics Anonymous has taught me: **"...no situation is too difficult and no unhappiness too great to be overcome."**

What a difference sobriety makes. There was a time when in a bind or unhappy with life, a drink was called for, and not just one, but many. So, what good did this do me? Not one bit. I made a fool of myself, hurt others and the next morning awoke with a giant headache. But did it help my difficult situation or make me happy? You know that answer: nada!

Fast forward a few years and I blessedly can step back and address difficulty and unhappiness in a much better way. No drinks are called for. I use only the tools that A.A. has given me, the tools found in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

I haven't lost a loved one, a job or a home in my sobriety. I've been around many of my fellow alcoholics who have, however, and it has been such a joy to see how wonderfully they handled their losses. Sure, they were sad. Sure, they cried their eyes out. But they knew they didn't have to drink. They used the program, not the bottle. They leaned on their fellow A.A. members, not on the tavern bar. And they came through their losses even stronger than before.

Thank God for Alcoholics Anonymous.

A.A. "Big Book" named to *Books That Shaped America* by Library of Congress



The book that has shaped millions of lives of alcoholics has been named one of the 88 Books That Shaped America by the Library of Congress.

Alcoholics Anonymous joined such well-known books as Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior of the Human Male*, Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*, Thomas Payne's *Common Sense* and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* at a Library of Congress exhibition viewed from late June through September in Washington, D.C.

Selection of the 88 books was done by curators and "experts" at the Library of Congress. This group said that "*Books That Shaped America* marks a starting point ...to spark a national conversation on books and their importance in Americans' lives, and, indeed, in shaping our nation."

Alcoholics Anonymous was first published in 1939 and is now in its fourth edition, with sales of more than 30 million copies.

Gratitude Dinner on November 15

The Gratitude Dinner, what many call A.A.'s event of the year, will be held Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Municipal Auditorium, 801 North Tamiami Trail in Sarasota.

Daniel B. is dinner chairman and has secured "Grateful" Eddie, former NYC resident, now living in Sarasota, as speaker for the event. Fellowship is at 5:30, dinner at 6:30 and the speaker at 8. "Grateful" Eddie, who can boast of 36 years of sobriety, is known as a forceful speaker on alcoholism.

Tickets for the event are \$15, available through Nov. 5 at the Sara-Mana InterGroup office at Suite B-2, 1748 Independence Blvd. in Sarasota. The office is open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"We're giving A.A.ers two ways to purchase tickets for the Gratitude Dinner," said Daniel. Individual tickets are available, or a group person can take orders from his or her group and buy multiple tickets."

A.A. classifieds can help your group

Need support for your group? Want to promote a local or district event? Changing the location of your meeting?

If you answered "yes" to any of those questions, or have other concerns, let us hear from you, and we'll add it to our new section of "classifieds" in the next newsletter.

It's as easy as sending an email to newsletter@aaqrq.org. Deadline for classified items is the 25th of the month.

Help the Helpline help others

By Robert Q., Helpline Chairman

At almost every group or A.A. meeting I attend, there is a list of group member phone numbers. I think to myself what a nice idea!

Anyone who wants to get in touch with another member of their group to plan a night out or a social function of some sort may do so because of this wonderful convenience.

They may even be interested in going to a meeting with you and for that matter they may actually need or want help. Easy access, how nice.

Did you know that in every Group Handbook there is a suggested form for group member information? Yes, there's that word "suggested." It's a word I sometimes use to rationalize or justify my own complacency or lack of willingness. It says right here it's only "suggested!"

The purpose of this member list is not for social matters. Believe it or not, it's so the local Office/Intergroup HELP LINE can call your group contact person, who will have an accurate list of group members they can call who are willing to make a 12th step call. Very simply, we all have from our founders, clear cut directions on HOW to use these group member lists.

It has been my experience, due to attrition, relocation, changed numbers and reasons unknown that our 12 step call list is in dire need of some love and willing members to serve on it. It is a challenge for those of us serving on the HELP LINE to reach out into the fellowship after a brother or sister has called and doesn't want to die, but doesn't know how to live.

As Doctor Bob said in the Pioneers of A.A. section of the Big Book, "I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly. I do it for four reasons:

1. Sense of duty
2. It is a pleasure
3. Because in so doing I am paying

Sara-Mana Classifieds

NEW MEETING: Come join us at the But for the Grace of God group at 7 p.m. on Monday nights at Faith Presbyterian Church, Beneva and 12th. This is a closed speaker meeting.

GET YOUR NEWSLETTER EMAILED TO YOU: Get local A.A. news while it's hot! Send your request to be on the email list to newsletter@aaqr.org.

GRATITUDE DINNER: In case you missed the story on page 1, it has been scheduled for November 15 at 5:30 p.m. at the Municipal Auditorium, 801 North Tamiami Trail in Sarasota. Grateful Eddie will be the speaker. Tickets are available for \$15 each from the Central Office, Suite B2 at 1748 Independence Blvd. in Sarasota.

NEW WEDNESDAY MEETING: Come one, come all. Step right up to a new Wednesday 6 p.m. Step Group meeting, held weekly at the Unity Church, located at 3023 Proctor Road in Sarasota. Be on the road to living the 12 steps.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER NEEDED to assist a woman in A.A. with 45 years of sobriety in getting to a meeting 3-4 times a month. She lives in the Honore and University area and likes to go to Lakewood Ranch meetings or the Kensington Park A.A. Group that meets at the St. James United Methodist Church. She does not use any sort of walking device and is fully ambulatory. Contact: Patty F., Special Needs Chair at specialneeds@aaqr.org, the Central Office at 351-4818 or email to info@aaqr.org

3 for September

STEP 9

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

TRADITION 9

A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

my debt to the man who took the time to pass it on to me.

4. Because every time I do I take out a little more inGsurance for myself against a possible slip."

If you have a year of continuous sobriety and a working knowledge of the steps, you can help. Contact Central Office at 941.351.4848 or send an email to helpline@aaqr.org.

September Limerick

There was a young woman named Carol
who went over life's falls in a barrel.
She found it no fun
and when she was done,
joined A.A. and was out of peril.

Carol K.

CONCEPT 9

Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

Is this your business meeting?



"Everyone here? Good meeting topic: Setting world record for shortest meeting. All in favor say aye. Ayes have it. Meeting over."

If at first you don't succeed.....

By Carol K.

.....No, don't give up, that's not the answer!

Since we received zero responses to the help wanted article in the July Sara-Mana Intergroup newsletter requesting new volunteers to start a Saturday morning AA meeting in the women's recovery pod at Sarasota county jail, let's try another approach.

How about destroying a common belief that you had to have been in jail in order to be a volunteer in a jail? Wrong. Myth. If you're hesitating because your path at the tables at Alcoholics Anonymous meetings didn't include a stopover at a jail or a prison and you think you have nothing to share with inmates, again, you're wrong. Remember what we were taught early in our program? Learn to identify, not compare. We're also told that ordinarily we would not be hanging around with each other, but now we share the extraordinary experience of recovery.

We all come to A.A. by different paths; mine was through a mental hospital, as I'm sure some of you have suspected. Whatever path you were on, once in A.A. we are united by a common illness and a common solution. The solution is what we speak about at A.A. meetings at SCJ. We all have war stories and don't want or need to engage in "can you

top this?" We talk recovery.

Think about the similarities we have, especially as women: the same sense of shame, guilt, and remorse; the feelings of unworthiness and no self worth. I don't know what I said at an early meeting, something about feeling unworthy of God's grace, when the kind woman next to me turned, put her hand on my arm, and said, "Carol, God will meet you where you are". Talk about a turning point and hope. These are the points of of commonality I have with the women inside SCJ, along with many of us having to come to terms with the regret of how we mothered, and now facing the responsibility of motherhood.

So, think about becoming a volunteer, either in the recovery pod or for the other inmates who sign up for the weekly meeting in general population. Not just on a Saturday, any day. Simply download the application from www.aasrq.org. Click on General Service and then on H&I Committee and print out the app and follow the mailing instructions.

One year of sobriety is required. Any questions please email scjpod@aasrq.org

DEAR ALKIE

Dear Alkie: Is there a course you take to become an A.A. member?

Alkie: In A.A. no one *tells* you how to live; they *show* you how to live.

Dear Alkie: How do I find out if I should join A.A.?

Alkie: A person finds their identity by identifying in, not out, because without identification A.A. is just information.

Dear Alkie: I've had a slip. Can I still be in A.A.?

Alkie: In A.A. we don't shoot our wounded; otherwise we'd all be dead. Instead we train them to become better soldiers.

Dear Alkie: I've heard a lot about "God's will". Any tips on how I'll know?

Alkie: If three people offer you the same advice, it's probably God's will--or at least good advice!!

Dear Alkie: I think you A.A. people are following me--you seem to know all about me!

Alkie: Alcoholics already know 85% of everything there is to know about one another before they meet, because to a greater or lesser degree, we've all shared the same feeling and experiences with alcohol. It's only our circumstances that differ.

Dear Alkie: What's your success rate in helping others?

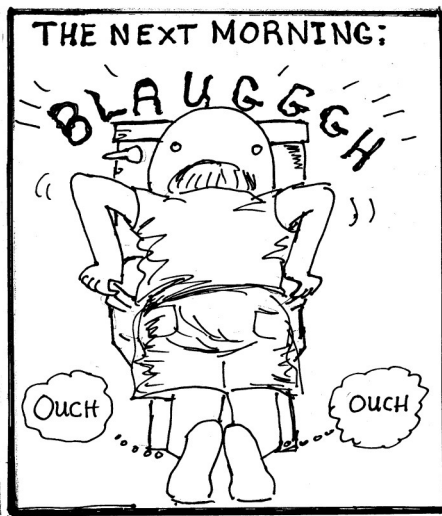
Alkie: I'm always at least 50% successful at helping others--because I am always helped!

Dear Alkie: What have you gotten out of being in A.A.?

Alkie: A.A. has given me everything I used to drink for.

Dear Alkie: Do you A.A. people really talk in meetings about your problems?

Alkie: The DIM (Do It Myself) method of problem solving is not the softer, easier way. When I share my problems I cut them in half; when I keep them to myself they double.



ANNIVERSARIES

Groups: email birthdays to newsletter@asrq.org and put ANNIVERSARIES in the subject line. Cutoff for the newsletter is the 25th of the month. Do not send anniversaries for future months: i.e. September anniversaries appear in October.

63RD AVENUE

July

Scott S. 37 years
John S. 29 years
Beth S. 20 years
Reid K. 1 year
August
Lance 37 years
Sylvia 1 year

BEE RIDGE EAST

July

Joe F. 2 years
Robert S. 19 years
Jack W. 33 years
Bob McK. 35 years
Ed K. 36 years
August
Jim M. 5 years
Mark S. 22 years

DONUT HOUR

August

Lee R. 32 years
Veronica H. 26 years
Valerie M. 3 years
Kathy A. 2 years
Mike W. 1 year
Chris G. 1 year

EARLY BIRD

July

Sher K. 13 years

FRIENDS OF THE PELICAN

July

Jennifer A. 2 years
John K. 5 years
Patrick W. 10 years

GULF GATE NOON

July

Ernie. 1 year
Leslie B. 2 years
Mark P. 14 years
Michael M. 3 years
Tom T. 31 years

KEEP IT SIMPLE MENS

July

Jim M. 5 years
Charlie S. 3 years

LAKEWOOD RANCH 12&12

July

Jim C. 5 years
Rich M. 14 years
August
Rebecca Z. 3 years
Deann K. 9 years

NEW WOMEN

July

Betsy J.W. 1 year
Barbara B. 26 years

OAK STREET

July

Cathie D. 3 years
David S. 9 years
Don B. 16 years
Frank O. 14 years
Galina S. 5 years
Hazel 31 years
Jim D. 23 years
Lynn L. 24 years
Mimi McA. 30 years
Mitchell G. 4 years
Patrick W. 11 years
Ricardo R. 2 years
Robyn D. 9 years
Shawndra B. 3 years
Tom L. 31 years
Victoria G. 24 years

OASIS

July

Chris L. 1 year
Jerry B. 3 years
Don E. 10 years
Don N. 13 years
Lou V. 25 years
Ed K. 36 years

PRIMARY PORPOISE

July

Kandy D. 1 Year
Russell K. 1 Year
Steven B. 8 Years
Victoria G. 24 Years

August

Veronica H. 26 years
Bruce R. 32 years

SERENITY

July

Rebecca B. 30 years
Jon N. 5 years
August
Debi R. 14 years
Ted S. 6 years
Marlis P. 3 years

SINGLENES OF PURPOSE

June

Kevin K. 7 years
July
Don Q. 25 years
Althea. 19 years

SUNRISE

July

Dean L. 2
Fred A. 6
Joe F. 2
John W. 23
Larry W. 7
Michelle S. 1
Mike T. 8
Ray L. 11
Ron W. 26
Skip M. 9
Susie W. 13
Tracy M. 3

August

Bob S. 20
Brian K. 16
Daniel S. 23
David B. 20
David B. 6
David F. 1
Jens A 3
Kyle H. 1
Martina C 2
Phil F. 29
Rey C. 3

UNDER THE RAINBOW

August

Ben P. 6 years
Tom J. 12 years

HELPLINE TOTALS

AUGUST 2012

Meeting time/location	12
In lieu of 12 step call	2
Actual 12 step call	16
Al-Anon	14
Special needs	0
Miscellaneous	68
Spanish Line	0
Total calls	212

All Helpline shifts are currently filled, but The Helpline still needs members willing to take and go on 12 step calls. Please contact Central Office (351-4818) or the Helpline through our website at asrq.org.

Grapevine quote of the day

"It has only been in the past few months that I have become interested in service work in AA. Before that, I was an AA barnacle, glued to my seat, criticizing the speakers and griping about the coffee. Now I'm on the other side of the squawks and bleeps, and I find, to my delight, I Like it."

TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER: Anniversaries, articles and meeting notices should be sent to newsletter@asrq.org. Submit material as attachments or placed directly into an email. Include your first name, group and type of item being sent. Deadline is the 25th day of the month. Submissions may be edited for length or content. The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of A.A., Sara-Mana Intergroup or the Central Office, which is located at #B-2, 1748 Independence Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34234. Phone 941.351.4818.