



HOW

Monthly Publication of the Indian River Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

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“The HOW is published to improve communication between local AA Groups and encourage the participation of AA members in service and activities.”

“A.A.’s Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their 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.”

Why all this insistence that every A.A. must hit bottom first? The answer is that few people will sincerely try to practice the A.A. program unless they have hit bottom. For practicing A.A.’s remaining eleven steps means the adoption of attitudes and actions that almost no alcoholic who is still drinking can dream of taking. Who wishes to be rigorously honest and tolerant? Who wants to confess his faults to another and make restitution for harm done? Who cares anything about a Higher Power, let alone meditation and prayer? Who wants to sacrifice time and energy in trying to carry the A.A.’s message to the next sufferer? No, the average alcoholic, self-centered in the extreme, doesn’t care for this prospect — unless he has to do these things in order to stay alive himself.

Under the lash of alcoholism, we are driven to A.A. and there we discover the fatal nature of our situation. Then, and only then, do we become open-minded to conviction and as willing to listen as the dying can be. We stand ready to do anything that will lift the merciless obsession from us.

- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 24

Today’s Reminder

Dear Lord,

Thank you for what you have given me;
For what you have taken away from me;
And for what you have left me.

THAT FIRST STEP IS THE TOUGHEST

The fellow who said that the first step off the Empire State Building was the toughest might well have been talking about the AA program. I had four problems which kept me from even trying the First Step and two more problems when I finally tried it. The whole process took three years.

You see, I could do “controlled” drinking (meaning that I didn’t get slobbering, falling-down drunk) sometimes for as long as several months. I would start with wine or beer on some “special occasion” and after one drink stop with no effort at all. So where’s the problem? Since there was none, I would try something more or stronger a few days later. It might take months before I got so unmanageably drunk that I had to be lugged off to the hospital — a couple of times in a straitjacket.

Problem #1. They say that lower levels of intelligence are unable to identify the relationship between cause and effect if the two are separated in time. There’s supposed to be a remote tribe somewhere that has never figured out what causes babies.

The fact that I failed repeatedly to relate the one innocent drink to the eventual drunk says something uncomplimentary about my intelligence. That innocent first drink lit the fuse of an immutable mechanism that kept on ticking until it exploded into another drunk. But it took all of three years for me to acknowledge the causal relationship. Some people get drunk right away. I just happened to have a long fuse.

Problem #2. This was the successor to each struggle with Problem #1. After each drunk, I dried out, I ate well, I exercised. Pretty soon I felt I could lick anything that came down the pike—including booze. My thinking went like this: “Don’t tell me that anyone in as good shape as I am who feels as well as I do can’t take a drink or two from time to time. Furthermore, I know the danger signs. I’ll just stop when I feel myself beginning to get tight. There’s certainly no sense in my giving up drinking entirely. No one would want my company and no way I could have any fun.”

We all know the answer to this: Our physical and emotional well being has no effect on our ability to handle alcohol.

Problem #3. I have never encountered anything in life I could not achieve, provided I gave it my total energy and concentration.

It’s a sign of weakness and an acceptance of defeat to admit that I can’t do something myself and have to turn to others for help —

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STEP

***"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol
- that our lives had become unmanageable"***

"For it is only by accepting and solving our problems that we can begin to get right with ourselves and with the world about us, and with Him who presides over us all. Understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living; therefore the joy of good living is the theme of AA's Twelfth Step."

*Reprinted from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
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PRINCIPLE BEHIND STEP 1

Honesty - "It is vital to concede that we are alcoholics if we are to achieve sobriety. The odds are against us if we don't completely admit defeat and surrender. This takes being truthful with ourselves. The alcoholic cannot differentiate the truth from the false. By learning to be honest with ourselves and admit an honest desire to be sober, we begin the spiritual program of action."

TRADITION 1

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is a but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare must come first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

CONCEPT 1

Final responsibility and final authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.



TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

1. Am I a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?
2. Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with such pious preludes as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into argument?
3. Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
4. Do I make competitive AA remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting AA in one place with AA in another?
5. Do I put down some AA activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect of AA.
6. Am I informed about AA as a whole? Do I support, in every way, AA as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?
7. Am I as considerate of AA members as I want them to be of me?
8. Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?
9. Do I go to enough AA meetings or read enough AA literature to really keep in touch?
10. Do I share with AA all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of fellowship?

THAT FIRST STEP IS THE TOUGHEST (continued from page 1)

and strangers at that. I'd rather die than submit myself to that kind of humiliation. A couple of times I darn near did die.

Problem #4. Where do they get this "life is unmanageable" stuff? I am holding down a good job. I am paying my bills. I have a wife and kids and a good roof over our heads. If I can do all these things, my life is certainly not "unmanageable." Q.E.D., why should I join AA, have to go to all those meetings and associate with all those stuffy people?

The four problems described above were what prevented me from even trying Step One. Then when I did try it, here is what I encountered.

Problem #5. What's this intellectually dishonest ploy about, not taking a drink for just one day? I know perfectly well that they intend that I should never take a drink as long as I live. I'm not going to participate in that kind of self-delusion. It may make the future awfully grim, but I've got to make up my mind never to take a drink from now till the day they bury me.

Problem #6. They tell me to ask for help from a Higher Power. If there is a "Higher Power" (which I doubt), then he must be a malicious one rather than a benevolent one. He's fixed it so I can never have any fun for the rest of my life. I can just see myself asking him for help!

So much for the problems. How did AA guide me past these six roadblocks to my sobriety?

First of all, my sponsor and others reviewed my history with me, over and over again, and were able to demonstrate beyond contradiction that:

The first drink — any drink — lit a fuse which led inexorably to a drunk.

Neither good health, happy circumstances in my life, nor any other factor could stay the burning of that fuse.

Not all my so-called intelligence, not my ability, and not my will power had been able to control my drinking.

So where was the intelligence in trying the same thing over and over again with the same disastrous result? Maybe intelligence would dictate that I try something else — like getting some help?

Finally, about my conviction that my life was "manageable," Webster cites one of the definitions of manage, "to achieve one's purpose."

Was I achieving any purpose — even the purpose of handling my drinking — to say nothing of the fact that my home life and my family were a shambles, my health was cracking at the seams, and I was barely holding on to my job? That doesn't sound as though I were managing. And if not, perhaps it's because I am powerless over alcohol.

So now I am grudgingly willing to admit that the First Step may possibly apply to me. How do I go about implementing this admission and making it a part of my basic thinking about myself?

They tell me that the sine qua non is that I must ask for help. It seems that the most important four-letter word in AA is

"talk." I've got to start talking to other members of AA about my feelings and the struggle I'm having in trying to practice the program. And the one I should talk to most is a sponsor.

This makes Job One the finding of a sponsor — someone whose sobriety I respect and to whom I can talk with reasonable comfort.

So I listen to different people at meetings and chat with some of them. Afterward I finally pick one with whom I have a lot in common outside of AA and who seems to be very comfortable in AA. When he agrees to be my sponsor, I start talking. I am surprised to discover that talking about my problems, rather than proving embarrassing, turns out to be encouraging and helpful. . . very helpful.

Job Two is to ask for help from a Higher Power (which I am not at all sure exists). But I figure that as long as I have gone this far in trying AA, I might as well keep on going. So I gulp and start every morning asking this Higher Power for help and thanking him every night.

Job Three is to yield on the "intellectual dishonesty" problem and give a try to this one-day-at-a-time delusion. I find that, while the assumption of having only this one day to contend with may be a delusion, it sure works. I can do a better job today because I've got an accomplishment which gives me a lift to tackle the next day. Instead of moping over the past and fearing the future, I am free to concentrate on today.

It's the most productive delusion I have ever encountered. It has been almost half a lifetime since I finally succeeded in taking that First Step. The struggle was so intense that I remember the whole experience rather vividly. It has been many years since the thought of a drink has even crossed my mind. I want to keep it that way.

So every morning when I say my prayers and confirm to my Higher Power that I am an alcoholic, I picture a specific favorite drink (frequently a dry martini with a twist) and, at the same time on my mental projector, I run a few feet of film of a specific alcoholic episode.

Then I call to mind how, when I first forced open my eyes at the end of a drunken episode, I was overcome by a dread horror of facing anyone or anything. I was desperate to cringe into my skin. I wanted to be a turtle so I could pull back into my shell. That would lead me to a frantic search for some basis — any basis — for accusing someone else of being the cause of my behavior.

By recalling these events and emotions I lock together the first drink and the inevitable consequences thereof. If I should ever reach for one, I am sure that projector would start running.

At that point, I ask my Higher Power — oh, yes, I almost forgot to say that he has proven to me that he exists — I ask him to help me stay away from a drink for that day. And he does.

This is my way of taking the First Step once again every single day.

B.F.P.
Vero Beach, FL
January 2005
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2013 OFFICE ACTIVITY

Calls for Assistance & Walk-Ins Nature of Calls

	OCT	NOV	DEC	4th Q	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	TOTAL
12th Step Support	16	10	11	37	52	54	39	182
General Info / Misc.	92	89	58	239	181	158	195	773
Purchases	80	93	69	242	278	217	238	975
Meeting Info	24	33	42	99	158	87	83	427
Alanon / NA	13	5	6	24	37	16	24	101
TOTAL	225	230	186	641	706	532	579	2458

Gate Lodge

TUESDAY 8:30 pm	
1/7	Noontime
1/14	ODAAT
1/21	Royal Palm
1/28	Easy Does It
2/4	Noontime
2/11	ODAAT
2/18	Easy Does It

THURSDAY 8:30 pm	
1/9	Roseland
1/16	Candlelight
1/23	I am Responsible
1/30	OSSABAW
2/6	Indian River Men's
2/13	Roseland
2/20	I Am Responsible

SATURDAY 8:30 pm	
1/11	South Vero
1/18	Early Risers
1/25	Vero Beach Men's
2/1	OSSABAW
2/8	Indian River Thursday
2/15	South Vero
2/22	Indian River Women's

All meetings start at 8:30pm. Group members that are taking the commitment are asked to check in with the tech on duty upon arrival. Thank you to all the groups for participating.

We represent the fellowship and present the program.

Please contact Samantha G. @ 772 584 9838

BHC**

MONDAYS @ 7:00 pm

** This facility requires 2 years of sobriety
for visiting AA's

1/13	South Vero
1/20	Lunch Bunch
1/27	Vero Beach Men's
2/3	Indian River Men's
2/10	South Vero
2/17	Lunch Bunch
2/24	Vero Beach Men's

BIRTHDAYS

January 2014

Happy Birthday to All!



Please bring list of your group's celebrants' names and number of years to Central Office or submit via e-mail to irhow@yahoo.com by the last Friday of the preceding month (email submissions preferred)
Thank you.

AA Only

Susie B.	8
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A New Day

Scott	2
Debbie	5
Priscilla	9

JoAnn	11
Kevin S.	12
Pete	20
John G.	21
Grey	29

Barefoot Bay

Rich S.	10
Tom D.	39
Bob W.	48

Candlelight

JoEllen P.	12
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Early Risers

Bill C.	3
Bob H.	3
Doug C.	4
Seth M.	26

Free and Easy

Ron F.	16
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Friday Night Young People

I Am Responsible

Mardi H.	4
Shannon R.	4
Irene M.	8

Indian River Thursday Night

Mark B.	3
Marie K.	8

Indian River Men's

Bob S.	5
Steve G.	18

Indian River Women's

Matry	4
Linda S.	13
Joli W.	19
Nancy	26

King's Highway

Judy S.	16
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The Magnolia Group

Annie H.	2
Joanie W. (Dec)	38

Man to Man

Phil C.	1
Rich S.	10
Bill (Boston) W.	20
James (Pete) D.	20

Mike S.	24
Gray L.	29
Bob D.	39
Tom O.	39
Walter L.	40
Bob W.	48

Meat & Potatoes Group

Annie C.	23
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Noontime

Robert	3
Jay	20

ODAAAT

Mike L.	2
Tony M.	3
Monica A.	3
Jeremiah L.	4
Terri C.	4
Frank C.	5
Doris G.	5
Debby H.	5
Mark G.	6
Chris B.	6
Alexa L.	7
Mary K.	8
Tom M.	11
Lee R.	19
Louise B.	22
Karen H.	24
Myra G.	25
David O.	26
Marc T.	29
Maureen S.	30
Steven D.	30
Jean S.	31
David J.	37
Beryl K.	47

OSSABAW

Jennifer G.	3
Charles D.	8
Mark P.	16
Eddie D.	17
Bill W.	20
Ray A.	25

Royal Palm

Tony M.	4
John R.	19
Ray F.	37

Roseland Sebastian Speakers

Safe Harbor

Sebastian 12 & 12

Wally L.	24
Vicki S.	25

Sebastian 5:32

Trent L.	20
Timmie.	35

Sebastian Lunch Bunch

Ava W.	10
Bill W.	20
Bob D.	39
Bob W.	48

Sebastian Sundowners

Kelly S.	2
Connie R.	2
Joe A.	2
Tom M.	3
Debbie H.	5
Susie B.	8
Priscilla G.	9
James D.	20
Grey L.	29

Sebastian Stepsisters

Joanne	2
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South Vero

Andrew W.	1
Ron V.	1
Barbara A.	2
Heidi V.	2
Mark G.	3
Ken Z.	3
Scott G.	8
Darcie A.	23
Herb G.	33
Tony B.	37

Surfside

Judy S.	16
Al C.	34
Barbara C.	38
Marty P.	49

Vero Beach 12 & 12

Jim F.	2
John L.B.	26

Vero Beach Group

Susan W.	11
Joli W.	19
Sarah P.	45

Vero Beach Men's

Mike R.	5
Justin B.	7
Tony S.	8
Bill K.	12
Marty P.	49

Vero Beach Step & Tradition

Central Office 7 year income/expenses

Income	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Birthday Plan	880	1,573	1,894	1,499	1,209	1,911	1,015
Birthday Dinner	4,524	5,999	4,848	3,750	6,225	6,552	5,771
Coffee & Soda	67	-14	-160	97	-137	117	48
Group Contributions	11,705	9,806	10,242	12,249	13,104	11,663	11,379
Other Contributions	2,513	2,091	65	202	654	297	539
Alkathons	486	9	550	818	601	523	722
Comedy							1,361
Unity	205	-90	122	180	120	86	144
Total Income	20,380	19,374	17,561	18,795	21,776	21,149	20,979
Expenses	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Alkathon	86	277	0	178	68	0	200
Birthday Dinner	1,932	2,329	2,289	2,893	1967	2870	4,021
Corporate Papers	61	61	61	61	61	61	70
Comedy							841
Insurance	466	468	462	464	463	459	648
Office Alarm	265	145	265	265	270	270	310
Office Electric	631	607	649	686	637	613	644
Office Lease	6,241	5,940	5,940	5,940	5940	5940	5,940
Office Supplies	2,368	1,687	1,768	1,060	866	1,550	1,533
Copier & Paper					2233	3110	2,920
Office Telephone	1,515	1,243	1,500	1,332	1268	1360	1,806
Outside Rentals	220	274	600	720	725	650	575
Postage	327	278	200	114	77	157	0
Press Journal					321	1605	0
HOW	2,892	2,693	3,055	4,283	1421	0	0
Where & When	1,226	2,345	2,008	3,203	739	0	0
Travel	150	310	0	188	0	150	450
Unity	155	145	0	118	145	67	150
Web Site	119	71	51	69	0	61	72
Total Expenses	\$18,654	\$18,873	\$18,848	\$21,574	\$17,201	\$18,923	\$20,180
Surplus/Loss	\$1,726	\$501	-\$1,287	-\$2,779	\$4,575	\$2,226	\$799
Printing (included above)							
HOW	2,892	2,693	3,055	4,283	1,421	0	0
Where & When	1,226	2,345	2,008	3,203	739	0	0
Staples (est)	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000		0	0
copier & paper					2,233	3,110	2,920
total	5,118	6,038	6,063	8,486	4,393	3,110	2,920
Literature (not included above)							
literature sales	12,011	11,187	11,615	14,587	12,942	13,004	10,523
sales tax	761	854	779	963	961	827	899
net sales	11,250	10,333	10,836	13,624	11,981	12,177	9,624
literature purchases	13,528	9,112	10,461	12,232	12,218	13,604	10,132
diff	-2,278	1,221	375	1,392	-237	-1,427	-508

Indian River Central Office
Account Balances as of December 31, 2013

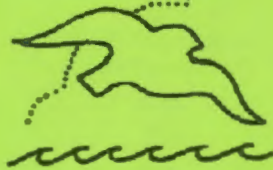
	December 31, 2012	December 31, 2013	\$ Difference
Operating Account	\$3,541	\$3,642	\$101
Prudent Reserve	\$4,002	\$4,003	\$1
Total	\$7,543	\$7,645	\$102

Income/Expense Comparison by Category - Last year
1/1/2012 through 12/31/2013

Category	1/1/2012- 12/31/2012	1/1/2013- 12/31/2013	Amount Difference
INCOME			
10 Birthday Plan	1,911	1,015	-896
12 Birthday Dinner	6,552	5,771	-781
15 Coffee & Soda Sales	117	48	-69
20 Group Contributions	11,663	11,379	-284
25 Comedy	0	1,361	1,361
30 Literature Sales	13,004	10,523	-2,482
35 Other Contributions	297	539	242
45 Alkathons	523	722	199
46 Unity Committee	86	144	58
TOTAL INCOME	34,153	31,501	-2,651
EXPENSES			
101 Alkathons	0	200	-200
102 Birthday Dinner	2,870	4,021	-1,151
103 Corporate Papers	61	70	-9
105 Literature Purchases	13,604	10,132	3,472
106 Comedy Expense	0	841	-841
130 Insurance	459	648	-188
140 Office Alarm	270	310	-40
142 Office Electric	613	644	-32
144 Office Lease	5,940	5,940	0
145 Office Supplies	1,550	1,533	17
146 Copier & Paper	3,110	2,920	189
150 Office Telephone	1,360	1,806	-446
153 Outside Rentals	650	575	75
156 Press Journal	1,605	0	1,605
167 Sales Tax 7%	827	899	-73
171 Travel	150	450	-300
172 Unity Committee	67	150	-83
175 Web Site	61	72	-11
TOTAL EXPENSES	33,197	31,212	1,985
OVERALL TOTAL	956	290	-666

Group Contributions 2013 vs. 2012

Group	Thru December 2012	Thru December 2013	<i>Difference</i>	Birthday Plan Contributions thru December 2013	Number of members contributing to Birthday Plan in 2013
A New Day		\$175		\$5	1
Barefoot Bay	\$400	\$200	-\$200		
Beachside Beginners	\$250	\$90	-\$160		
Beginnings in Sebastian	\$1,380	\$1,500	\$120		
Candlelight	\$200	\$100	-\$100	\$36	2
Early Risers	\$300		-\$300		
Easy Does It					
Free & Easy	\$24	\$10	\$0	\$17	2
Friday Night Young People					
Hibiscus Monday Night	\$100	\$125	\$25	\$52	1
Hibiscus Thursday Night	\$322	\$300	-\$22		
I Am Responsible	\$175	\$700	\$525	\$67	5
IR Men	\$208	\$150	-\$58	\$12	1
IR Thursday Night					
IR Women	\$361	\$30	-\$331	\$18	1
Kings Highway	\$100		-\$100	\$14	1
Magnolia Group		\$100	\$100		
Man To Man	\$666	\$750	\$84		
New Beginnings		\$100	\$100		
Noontime Recovery	\$75	\$100	\$25		
No Name	\$425	\$230	-\$195		
ODAAT	\$1,673	\$1,675	\$2	\$221	10
Ossabaw	\$220	\$325	\$105	\$1	1
Roseland/Sebastian Speaker	\$325	\$200	-\$125		
Royal Palm	\$175	\$195	\$20	\$66	2
Safe Hardor Women	\$350	\$175	-\$175	\$178	7
Sebastian As Bill Sees It	\$124	\$0	-\$124		
Sebastian 12&12	\$35	\$105	\$70		
Sebastian 5:32	\$213	\$150	-\$63	\$23	1
Sebastian Lunch Bunch	\$768	\$230	-\$538		
Sebastian Freedom		\$50	\$50		
Sebastian Noon Recovery		\$80	\$80		
Sebastian Sundowners	\$681	\$1,244	\$563		
Sober Rainbow	\$52	\$25	-\$27		
Sobriety to Serenity	\$213	\$193	-\$20		
South Vero	\$215	\$400	\$185		
Stepsisters	\$223	\$97	-\$126	\$65	3
Surfside	\$100	\$70	-\$30	\$89	2
Thurs Night Big Book Study		\$90	\$90		
VB Mens	\$900	\$670	-\$230	\$50	4
VB Step & Traditions	\$28	\$55	\$27		
Vero Beach	\$300	\$550	\$250	\$91	4
Vero 12&12	\$82	\$50	-\$32		
You Are Not Alone		\$25	\$25		
Not Identified		\$65	\$65	\$10	1
Total	\$11,663	\$11,379	-\$284	\$1,015	49



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 UnityKim G.
 WebsiteDutch V.
 Where and WhenDonald S.
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 12th List CoordinatorBob G.

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 Karen M.
 Don Mc.

It is both a privilege and a responsibility for groups and members to insure that not only their group but also the Indian River Central Office remains self-supporting. It has been a tradition in Indian River County that individual members are encouraged to donate one dollar for each year of sobriety, during their Birthday or anniversary month. Below is a handy form for that purpose.

Indian River Central Office Birthday Plan

This contribution on my #_____A.A. Birthday is my way of saying *thank you* to the Central Office for serving the A.A. community in Indian River County.

Contributor: _____

Address: _____

* Group Name: _____

Please indicate whether you want your contribution credited to (a) your group* or (b) anonymously _____

Make check out to **Indian River Central Office of AA**. Drop off at the Central Office or mail to the address listed Below.

**1600 26th Street, Suite 6
 Vero Beach, FL 32961**

Phone 772-562-1114