



# 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.”

## NO PERSONAL POWER

*“At first the remedy for my personal difficulties seemed so obvious that I could not imagine any alcoholic turning the proposition down were it properly presented to him, Believing so firmly that Christ can do anything, I had the unconscious conceit to suppose that he would do everything through me - right then and in the manner I chose. After six long months, I had to admit that not a soul had surely laid hold of the Master - not excepting myself.”*

*“This brought me to the good healthy realization that there were plenty of situations left in the world over which I had no personal power - that if I was so ready to admit that to be the case with alcohol, so I must make the same admission with respect to much else. I would have to be still and know that He, not I, was God.”*

- The A.A. Way of Life, p. 114

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*“Now your attitudes and thoughts must all be constantly changing for the better. Yes, you must be a new and different person.”*

(Ephesians 4:23)

## “CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.”

Step Two is specifically designed for the mental obsession. I, in and of myself, cannot remove an obsession. The word “believe” is a verb. There is an action. Believe means “to allow”. I am restored to sanity as a result of allowing something into my consciousness other than my own insane thinking and feeling. I find it intriguing that right after I identify the problem in Step One—no control, no choice, no power and my need for God—comes this simple solution.

A Power greater than myself that can restore me to my right mind. There are only two questions I have to answer. “Am I willing to believe there is a power greater than me?” and “Is it all or nothing?” I don’t even have to have an idea about what this power is other than it be loving and caring. It started with my willingness to reach out and practice the rigorous honesty in the First Step. I had to get out of my head and into action. I have to be willing to let someone else know exactly what I am thinking and feeling. This meant I had to talk about what was really on my mind and in my heart. I had to be willing to be vulnerable. This simple action saved me from going back to using and drinking time and again when the obsession was so intense, I could not imagine it could ever be silenced. Without exception, every time I reached out for help, I received it. I called women at 1, 2, 3, 4 o’clock in the morning and they all got up and talked to me. They each said the strangest thing—that I had helped them more than they had helped me. This was a clear demonstration of this Power working through others to help me stay sober although I did not recognize it at the time.

This Power continued to lead me as I went to meetings and heard exactly what I needed to hear at the precise moment I needed to hear it. As I worked through all the Steps, I became more conscious of this Power, myself and you. I came to understand the intrinsic connection between us all. The Second Step tells me I cannot do recovery alone. I don’t have to figure anything out. I can begin to have an experience with this awesome Power that keeps me sober, gives me a new life and reveals more and more truth as I become more teachable and place more reliance on God than self.

- Charlotte S.,

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# STEP

***“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”***

“As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps.”

*Big Book, page 46  
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## **PRINCIPLE BEHIND STEP 2**

**Hope** - “In order to engage in a course of alcoholism re-recovery, we must have hope of success. If there is no hope, why try? We have not been able to stay sober on our own, and the desperation we feel when we enter AA is overwhelming. A way to instill hope is to realize recovery is not a question of ability, but rather a de-sire to stay sober. Seeing others recover and live free of alcohol brings hope.””

### **TRADITION 2**

For our group purpose, there is one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience; our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.

### **CONCEPT II**

The General Service Conference of AA has become for nearly every purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.

### **TRADITIONS CHECKLIST**

1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support, my group officers, AA committees and office workers?  
New-comers? Old-timers?
2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs, or other AA responsibility?
3. Do I look for credit in my AA jobs?  
Praise for my AA ideas?
4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
5. Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

## THE 12 STEP JOURNEY - AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

“CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES  
COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY”

-by Fr. Bill Wigmore  
(*Recovery Today* / Feb. 2011)

I wish I had a nickel for all the hours I wasted thinking and worrying about Step Two. Today I tell people if they're spending more than a few minutes on this Step, they're probably wasting their time and perhaps even delaying the start of their own recovery. I have a feeling Dr. Bob and some of the early A.A. pioneers might agree.

One of those pioneers was Clarence Snyder, a young drunk from Cleveland, Ohio. He recounts how very quickly Dr. Bob took him through this "Step" when he was a patient of his back in 1938. Still laying in his detox bed there in Akron, Dr. Bob was concerned Clarence might be a little too young for recovery so he grilled him hard on his readiness to start the program. Clarence recalled, "I was down to 135 pounds, no job, no clothes, and no money. I didn't know how much more ready I could be. Still, I had to convince them I was ready." (Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers, p. 144.)

Having passed muster on what was later to become Step One, Bob immediately proceeded to introduce Clarence to the question that Wilson later codified into Step Two.

"Do you believe in God, young fella?" (He always called me 'young fella.' When he called me Clarence I knew I was in trouble.)

'What does that have to do with it?'

'Everything,' he said.

'I guess I do.'

'Guess nothing! Either you do or you don't.'

'Yes, I do.'

'That's fine,' Dr. Bob replied. 'Now we're getting someplace. All right, get out of bed and on your knees. We're going to pray.'"

Dr. Bob and his newest recruit had just completed Step Two and together they were now on their knees to share Step Three, all in under a minute and a half!

In moving newcomers through the Step Two process so rapidly, Dr. Bob was practicing the program of action that had been passed on to him through the members of the Oxford Group. It was called "the experiment of faith."

To begin the experiment it wasn't necessary to believe in God – it was only necessary to believe that the existence of God was at least "a theoretical possibility" - and that if God did in fact exist, then God had the power to remove "the obsession of the mind," "the "insanity," "the unmanageability" that doomed alcoholics to return to drinking in spite of the awful consequences they experienced. Then, just as a scientist would proceed to test his theory in a laboratory, the alcoholic was to test the theory of this new spiritual approach to recovery by following a course of action (namely, completing the next several Steps).

If I had landed in the alcoholic ward of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, Ohio back when Dr. Bob was the physician in charge, I can now imagine how he might have introduced me to "the experiment of faith." Maybe half way through my detox, when the fog was barely lifting and the pain of my last drunk still stung deep, he'd stop by my bed and ask, "Now are you ready to try this spiritual approach to solving your drinking problem?"

A quick review of my drinking history along with some honest sharing from the good doctor about his own battles with alcohol would help me understand what the "powerless" part of the illness was all about. He'd talk about my "powerlessness" as if it were a physical allergy. An allergic reaction triggered by the first drink that made me crave more, and more, and more alcohol. "It's really pretty simple," he'd say.

Then he'd start in on "the unmanageability" part of my illness. "If the stuff's causing you all these problems, why haven't you been able to quit and stay quit on your own?" He'd lead me through a short and painful review of my own "quitting history" along with some more honest sharing about all the times he'd tried to quit but had never found the needed Power to stay quit – not until now. "Hopeless," is what he'd call it. "If you're anything like me," he'd say, "you're absolutely hopeless --- short of a miracle that is; but this is your lucky day, Son, cause miracles are what I see happen here every day." And that's when he'd invite me to test out "the experiment of faith" for myself.

"It's really very simple," he'd say. "Do you believe, or are you even willing to believe that there might be a God?" "You don't have to be sure there's a God, you don't have to know it; you just have to admit to the possibility. That's all you need to begin."

(continued on page 5)

**35th Annual**  
**Indian River Central Office**  
**BIRTHDAY DINNER**  
*Courage To Change*



**Saturday, March 15th, 2014**

Community Church of Vero Beach

1901 23rd Street

Featured Speaker will be Karl M. from Covina, CA

**DOORS OPEN at 6:00pm**

**DINNER SERVED at 6:30pm**

**SPEAKER at 8:00 pm**

**TICKETS - \$18.00**

Available from Intergroup Representative  
and at the Central Office • 772.562.1114

**PLEASE BRING A COVERED DESSERT**

"Now just one more question and we'll be done. This God who you admit might exist, does he have the power to relieve your alcoholism? I'm not saying that he would, mind you, only that if he existed could he do that?"

"Yes, of course," you'd hear me say, "If there's a God, he could certainly do that. "

"Congratulations," the old man would say, "That's all there is to it. There might be a God and, if there is, God might help you. Really pretty simple, isn't it? Now let's kneel down here and let me hear you say an honest prayer and ask this God who might exist for help, cause without it, kid, you're sunk!"

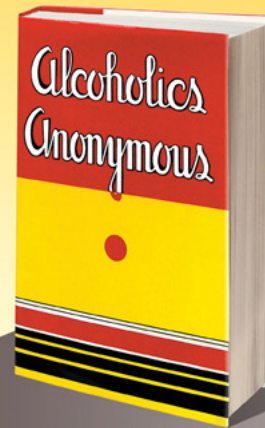
When Bill Wilson wrote the 12 Steps he said he learned the ideas he formulated into Steps 2 through 11 directly from Sam Shoemaker, an Episcopal priest and leader of the Oxford Group in the United States. Shoemaker had written, "Religion is a risk. The romance of religion is the romance of a risk.... Faith is not sight: It is a high gamble. There are only two alternatives here. God is, or He isn't. You leap one way or the other. It is a risk to take to bet everything you have on God. So is it a risk not to." (Shoemaker, *Confident Faith*, p. 187.) He also wrote that "Any honest person can begin the spiritual experiment by surrendering as much of himself as he can, to as much of Christ as he understands" (Shoemaker, *Extraordinary Living for Ordinary Men*, p. 76)

And so, when Bill Wilson landed in detox for the fourth time, he too joined in the Oxford Group experiment. Finding himself in the depth of depression and despair, he got out of his bed and prayed, "If there is a God, let Him show Himself! I am ready to do anything, anything!" The rest, as they say, is A.A. history.

*-by Fr. Bill Wigmore  
(Recovery Today / Feb. 2011)*

## 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Edition of A.A.'s Big Book

This Conference-approved special edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* is a reproduction of the first printing of the first edition of the Big Book with bulky paper and the colorful "circus cover" as it was published in 1939. Available now to preorder for April 2014 publication.



**COMING IN APRIL - INQUIRE AT INDIAN RIVER CENTRAL OFFICE**  
*(or pre-order with form available online)*

## **THIS IS YOUR HOW !**

**Let the voice of Indian River AA be heard.  
Share your Experience, Strength and Hope with others through  
your stories of personal recovery from alcoholism.**

**Email to [irhow@yahoo.com](mailto:irhow@yahoo.com)  
or bring submissions to the Indian River Central Office**



# 2014 OFFICE ACTIVITY

## Calls for Assistance & Walk-Ins Nature of Calls

	JAN	FEB	MAR	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q	TOTAL
12th Step Support	n/a							
General Info / Misc.	n/a							
Purchases	n/a							
Meeting Info	n/a							
Alanon / NA	n/a							
<b>TOTAL</b>	n/a							

# Gate Lodge

TUESDAY 8:30 pm	
2/11	ODAAT
2/18	Easy Does It
2/25	A New Day
3/4	Noontime
3/11	ODAAT
3/18	Easy Does It
3/25	Royal Palm

THURSDAY 8:30 pm	
2/13	Roseland
2/20	I Am Responsible
2/27	Candlelight
3/6	Indian River Men's
3/13	Roseland
3/20	I Am Responsible
3/27	Candlelight

SATURDAY 8:30 pm	
2/15	South Vero
2/22	Indian River Women's
3/1	Vero Beach Men's
3/8	Early Risers
3/15	South Vero
3/22	Indian River Thursday
3/29	Vero Beach Group

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

2/17	Lunch Bunch
2/24	Vero Beach Men's
3/3	Indian River Men's
3/10	South Vero
3/17	Lunch Bunch
3/24	Vero Beach Men's
3/31	Indian River Men's

# BIRTHDAYS

## February 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.

<b>AA Only</b>	
Ken C. ....	17
Carol B. ....	26

<b>A New Day</b>	
Mark .....	2
Bryan .....	6
Jennifer .....	6

<b>Barefoot Bay</b>	
Jim C. ....	25
Don H. ....	26
Bertelle. ....	28
MaryAnn. ....	29

<b>Candlelight</b>	
Mike B. ....	6

#### Early Risers

.....

<b>Easy Does It</b>	
Michelle H. ....	3
MaryJo K. ....	12
Kathy I. ....	22

#### Free and Easy

.....

#### Friday Night Young People

.....

#### I Am Responsible

Stephanie B. ....	2
Robert K. ....	4
Margaret B. ....	55

#### Indian River Thursday Night

Larry K. ....	8
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#### Indian River Men's

.....

#### Indian River Women's

.....

#### King's Highway

.....

#### The Magnolia Group

Jan P. ....	2
Denise D. ....	26

#### Man to Man

Mark Y. ....	2
Mike G. ....	26
Jack C. ....	43

#### Meat & Potatoes Group

.....

#### Noontime

.....

#### ODAAT

Bob G. ....	4
James F. ....	4
Annabel R. ....	5
Rod M. ....	5
Dustin H. ....	5
Chris S. ....	6
Fran V. ....	7
Philip K. ....	27
Monika R. ....	29
Hank H. ....	29
Doug S. ....	32
George M. ....	49

#### OSSABAW

Sheila R. ....	6
Dick T. ....	34

#### Royal Palm

Ed B. ....	25
John B. ....	35
Barb P. ....	35

#### Roseland Sebastian Speakers

Lori B. ....	22
Lela H. ....	45

#### Safe Harbor

Susan L. ....	6
Jan G. ....	11
Sue B. ....	23
Joan R. ....	48

#### Sebastian 12 & 12

.....

#### Sebastian 5:32

Dave A. ....	1
Ann W. ....	15
Liz R. ....	23

#### Sebastian Lunch Bunch

Donna R. ....	3
Michael P. ....	8
Judy .....	12
Rose .....	17
Pete C. ....	37

#### Sebastian Sundowners

Vivian L. ....	1
Krisitna C. ....	4

#### Sebastian Stepsisters

.....

#### South Vero

Jeremy S. ....	5
Thom P. ....	6
Peggy H. ....	8
Boyd W. ....	18
Toby L. ....	21
Michael F. ....	22
Louise M. ....	29
Dick B. ....	37

#### Surfside

Ted L. ....	21
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#### Vero Beach 12 & 12

Brett H. ....	21
Vera C. ....	25

#### Vero Beach Group

James N. ....	4
Skip M. ....	23

#### Vero Beach Men's

Todd .....	1
Cliff .....	2
Steve A. ....	7
James W. ....	11
Rich K. ....	21
Mike K. ....	32

#### Vero Beach Step & Tradition

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Indian River Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous  
 1600 26th Street, Suite 6  
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 Vero Beach, FL 32961  
 772-562-1114



www.indianriveraa.org • info@indianriveraa.org

**2014 Steering Committee**

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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 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 6  
 Vero Beach, FL 32961**

**Phone 772-562-1114**