



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.”

JUNE 10TH, 2014 79 YEARS

June 10th, 2014, marks 79 years since our co founder Dr. Bob S. had his last drink. Ironically it was given to him by his fellow co founder, Bill W., to help him get over the jitters so he could perform surgery that day. It had been just less than a month that the two men met for the first time. It was not a pleasant meeting at first. One was an out of work stockbroker (Bill W.), the other an almost washed up surgeon (Bob S.).

The surgeon was in deep trouble, his drinking had been out of control for many years and everything he had tried just depressed him more, since none of the methods used had worked. The stockbroker’s story had been the same but he had found hope through an epiphany he had in a hospital room just 6 months previous.

This meeting, which Doctor Bob had stated would be for 15 minutes only, lasted 6 1/2 hours. The very next day, Bill W. moved in with Dr. Bob, his wife Ann and their two children. Dr. Bob, as a true alcoholic, said he would do everything Bill asked him to do, except one (sound familiar?), he could not, would not make restitution and/or amends.

As we know from history, Dr. Bob got drunk once more, and upon recovering from that bout, he immediately set forth to do the one thing he said he couldn’t do — he made his amends, or as he called it, he “mended fences.” Hence the phrase:

“RARELY HAVE WE SEEN A PERSON FAIL WHO HAS THOROUGHLY FOLLOWED OUR PATH.”

Thank You Bill, Thank you Dr. Bob

WILLINGNESS AND THE 6TH STEP

In Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, the guidebook written by one of AA’s founders, the chapter on Step 6 begins:

‘This is the step that separates the men from the boys....’ So declares a well-loved clergyman ... who goes on to explain that any person capable of enough willingness and honesty to try repeatedly Step Six on all his faults-without any reservations whatever-has indeed come a long way spiritually....”¹

“The step that separates the men from the boys.” No doubt in today’s more gender-focused society he would add, “... and the women from the girls.” Or maybe he would just say that it’s where the rubber meets the road, for no other Step so challenges us when it comes to the sustained effort required to “practice these principles in all our affairs.”

Why this is so might not be immediately apparent when we first encounter Step 6. It certainly wasn’t apparent in the early days of AA, for the “Big Book,” Alcoholics Anonymous, devotes just one short paragraph to it. In effect it says that willingness is indispensable and that if we’re not completely ready to give up a character defect, then we should ask God to help us become willing.

That doesn’t sound like much. But anyone who has lived the program for any length of time knows-as Bill W. learned during the years between the Big Book and the 12&12-that becoming willing or “entirely ready” often requires substantial persistent effort. God doesn’t do all the work; we must do our part.

Exactly what our part involves varies for each of us depending upon the particular character defect, how attached we are to it, and whether we believe the benefits of practicing it outweigh the costs of giving it up. Some defects seem pretty harmless-at least in comparison with others that are worse. And some seem so much a part of us, or so useful in getting

(continued on page 3)

1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8 9 10 11 12

STEP

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character"

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character" — is A.A.'s way of stating the best possible attitude one can take in order to make a beginning on this lifetime job. This does not mean that we expect all our defects to be lifted out of us as the drive to drink was. A few of them may be, but with most of them we shall have to be content with patient improvement. The key words "entirely ready" underline the fact that we want to aim at the very best we know or can learn.

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
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PRINCIPLE BEHIND STEP 6

Willingness- "Now that we have accomplished an inventory of the good and not so good aspects of our character and behavior, are we willing to change them? All of them? The important part in the 12 step principle is the willingness to let go of old behaviors and rely on our Higher Power."

TRADITION 6

An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige may divert us from our primary purpose.

CONCEPT VI

The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

1. Should my fellow group members and I go out and raise money to endow several AA beds in our local hospital?"
2. Is it good for a group to lease a small building?
3. Are all the officers and members of our local club for AA's familiar with "Guidelines for Clubs" (which is available free from GSO)?
4. Should the Secretary of our group serve on the mayor's advisory committee on alcoholism?
5. Some alcoholics will stay around AA only if we have a TV and card room. If this is required to carry the message to them, should we have these facilities?

WILLINGNESS AND THE 6TH STEP

(continued from page 1)

what we think we need in life, that we might not even recognize them as defects until we're sick and tired of the suffering they cause.

So just what are these character defects that the Step is concerned with?

Some people equate them with the "Seven Deadly Sins," otherwise known as Pride, Greed, Envy, Lust, Sloth, Anger, and Gluttony. (See the note below on Sin.²) That's not a bad place to start, for if we look closely at more specific defects we usually find that they are manifestations of one or more of the seven. Self-centeredness, for instance, is connected with pride...and with greed...and with each of the other 5 as well.

Other sources have compiled extensive lists of character defects. Studying such lists and discussing them with your sponsor and others can be helpful, but in working Step 6 you will develop your own list that applies specifically to you. And as you continue working the Step over the years, that list will probably grow—though as we progress in recovery we usually get free of most of the worst defects.

All of the character defects in these lists describe habitual attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors that cause unnecessary conflict with other people, within ourselves, and with the God of our understanding. Often they have evolved from survival strategies that we learned in childhood. They may have served a purpose at one time, but later in life they interfere with developing healthy relationships and with learning more effective strategies for dealing with life's challenges. Yet we cling to them like a starving child clings to a tiny crust of bread, fearing to let go and take the bowl full of strange food he's not sure of. Giving them up is an act of faith.

Becoming entirely ready, then, is often achieved as the consequence of a painful struggle with each defect similar to the struggle that brought us to the program in the first place. Most of us are not willing to give up the worst of them until we can no longer stand the pain they cause and have exhausted our efforts to manage them. Thus the process of recovery requires persistent effort to identify patterns of thinking and behavior that no longer work for us.

We must be willing to continue the process of thorough self-examination that we started in Step 4, and to continue discussing our findings with trusted others as we learned

in Step 5. We must be willing to reconsider all of our habitual thoughts and behaviors in light of the character defects that we are beginning to recognize: are we really being nice, or are we being passively aggressive? We must be willing to acknowledge the harmful consequences of some behaviors and attitudes that we've learned to rely on, such as acting out anger to get our way. And we must be willing to keep an open mind to learning new and better ways of doing things, and to letting others show us how.

How do we know that we're willing?

By doing it.

¹*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 1952)*

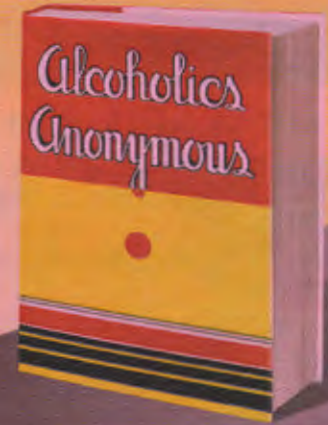
²*It may be helpful to note that the word "sin" can be very confusing and sometimes a bit frightening—especially to folks who think "sin" means a terrible offense against God for which He will punish you with eternal hellfire and damnation. Whew! Pretty scary stuff! And also utterly contrary to Jesus's depiction of a forgiving God who is like a loving Father. What loving father would condemn His children to eternal torture because they made a mistake?*

The English word "sin" in this context connotes guilt of some moral transgression—"doing something wrong." The New Testament Greek word usually translated as "sin" in English is hamartia. It is derived from hamartanein, an archery term that means "to miss the mark."

Aristotle defined the moral meaning of hamartia as an offense committed by mistake or ignorance. Thus, "sinning" is correctly understood as "falling short of our aim due to mistake or ignorance." And rather than being punished for our mistakes by a wrathful, perfectionistic God, our loving Father simply allows us the freedom to learn by suffering the consequences of our own errors.

75th 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.



AVAILABLE AT THE INDIAN RIVER CENTRAL OFFICE

58th Florida State Convention 2014

"Serenity at the Beach"

July 16-20, 2014

**Harbor Beach Marriot Resort & Spa
Fort Lauderdale**

3030 Holiday Drive
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316
(954) 525-4000

Registration begins at \$35 with various
activities and meals at extra charges.

www.58flstateconvention.com

The Marriott Harbor Beach and the Sheraton Ft. Lauderdale
Beach Hotel are in a **SOLD OUT** situation at the moment.
**PLEASE DON'T GIVE UP!
REGISTER FOR THE CONVENTION!**

HELP SERVE INDIAN RIVER A.A.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
FOR
INDIAN RIVER
CENTRAL OFFICE
INTERGROUP

POSITIONS OPEN

- DISTRICT 6 LIASION
- UNITY CHAIRPERSON

772-562-1114 or
info@indianriveraa.org

MEETING CHANGE!

Vero Beach Men's Thursday Night

NEW TIME: 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

**(NO MEETING ON THE 2ND
THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH)**

USED GRAPEVINES?

Please donate your used Grapevines to
the Public Information Committee.

You can drop them off at Central Office.
They will be distributed to various waiting
rooms around the county.
Thank you for your support.

ARE WE REALLY WILLING TO CHANGE?

The First Step was a cinch for me. I had run out of options, and the results of my drinking had been devastating; so self-debate about drinking simply didn't exist. I knew I couldn't drink safely. I did the First Step at the moment I entered a hospital for detoxification, and I have never questioned it since.

It then took several weeks to get to the Second Step, but it became apparent that I hadn't stopped drinking on my own. A Higher Power had obviously intervened, so the Third Step was understandable and necessary.

My sponsor pushed, shoved, and tugged, and I eventually did the Fourth and Fifth Steps. From that point onward, I made immense progress. Even the Ninth Step was faced with resolution and courage. I made the appropriate amends and experienced the feeling of liberation that my sponsor had promised. The other Steps were the logical extension of the program for me. I became active in Twelfth Step work and enjoyed the rewards.

Still, something was missing. There remained lingering feelings of vague discontent. The personality flaws I had uncovered in doing the Fourth and Fifth Steps had diminished – but were still there. And they started up the same old process that had produced feelings I had when drinking – impatience, irascibility, quick temper, and an unforgiving attitude toward others. I didn't like the way I felt, so I had dinner with my sponsor and discussed my situation frankly with him.

He gave me one of his knowing smiles, but said nothing. "Well," I demanded, "what's your solution to this problem?"

"You really think you've done all the Steps, don't you?" he asked. I assured him, somewhat indignantly, that I had. Hadn't I done the Fourth and Fifth with him? Had he not seen my Twelfth Step activity with his own eyes? Wasn't he aware of how faithfully – in my mind – I was doing the Tenth Step?

"All very true," he said, "but what about the Sixth Step?"

That came like a bolt from the blue. Of course, I was willing to change and have my Higher Power remove my defects of character, wasn't I?... Was I?

If I was sincerely willing to change, why did I remain so much the same? I realized that I had been paying lip service to the Sixth Step. Compared to most of the other Steps, the Sixth is apparently simple. I believed this, because no overt action seemed required. There is none of the dramatic confrontation that exists when we do the Ninth Step, nor is there the feeling of accomplishment that comes with the Twelfth. The Sixth is not dramatic. There are no enthusiastic witnesses to rush up and shake one's hand. It's a rather solitary affair and hence seems simple.

The Sixth Step means facing ourselves, and that is often more difficult than being honest with another person. I have found it difficult to lie to others but still easy to lie to myself. When I say, all too swiftly, "Of course, I'm willing to change," I now ask myself, "Really? Who's kidding who?" The fact that I am now questioning my willingness to change has increased my ability to be increasingly willing. I simply don't take the process as lightly as I did before. I can't learn anything unless I'm sincerely willing to learn. Nor will making myself promises to change have any significance until the willingness factor is developed.

My sponsor intervened again with a few of his pointed questions. "You played football in college, didn't you?" he asked knowing full well that I had. He reminded me that I had told him I absolutely hated the practice, "getting all those lumps and bruises for no good reason." And he also reminded me how I had said I loved the actual game, especially the applause when I did something very well.

"You know," he said, "no one gets all excited about the practice. It has no flash to it. It's the game that counts. But a good game performance requires hard practice. And the Sixth Step can be compared with football practice. If you're going to continue to make progress in the program and with the other eleven Steps, you have to really work on the Sixth Step. Don't stand around on one foot waiting for applause. There won't be any. But you'll play a far better game."

What my sponsor told me carries an important moral lesson. It's one I'm working diligently to learn, because now – finally – I see the true value of the Sixth Step.

*R.B., Manhattan, NY
December 1980*

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2014 OFFICE ACTIVITY

Calls for Assistance & Walk-Ins Nature of Calls

	APR	MAY	JUNE	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q	TOTAL
12th Step Support	12	31		42	43			85
General Info / Misc.	86	93		204	179			383
Purchases	118	90		367	208			575
Meeting Info	25	31		105	56			161
Alanon / NA	4	8		26	12			38
TOTAL	245	253		744	498			1242

Gate Lodge

TUESDAY 8:30 pm	
6/10	Easy Does It
6/17	A New Day
6/24	Easy Does It
7/1	Noontme
7/8	ODAAT
7/15	A New Day
7/22	Easy Does It

THURSDAY 8:30 pm	
6/12	Roseland
6/19	I Am Responsible
6/26	Candlelight
7/3	Indian River Men's
7/10	Roseland
7/17	Candlelight
7/24	I Am Responsible

SATURDAY 8:30 pm	
6/14	South Vero
6/21	Indian River Thursday
6/28	Vero Beach Group
7/5	Vero Beach Froup
7/12	South Vero
7/19	Early Risers
7/26	Vero Beach Men'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

6/16	Vero Beach Men's
6/23	Indian River Men's
6/30	South Vero Group
7/7	Lunch Bunch
7/14	Vero Beach Men's
7/21	Indian River Men's
7/28	Early Risers

BIRTHDAYS

June 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

Dan W.	23
BARbara G.	27

A New Day

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Barefoot Bay

Tim W.	37
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Candlelight

Jay A.	4
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Early Risers

Jon	1
Murray	28
John	39

Easy Does It

Patrick	25
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Free and Easy

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Friday Night Young People

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I Am Responsible

Zach J.	2
Korelei G.	9
Alex I.	10
Paul S.	16
Tom W.	24

Indian River Thursday Night

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Indian River Men's

Lonnie	5
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Indian River Women's

.....

King's Highway

Heidi P.	15
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The Magnolia Group

Joyce	32
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Man to Man

Jonn W.	4
Marty R.	4
Nick F.	10
Mark L.	14

Paul T.	17
Bill F.	20
Pat B.	29

Meat & Potatoes Group

Bobbie D.	42
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Noontime

Maryann	1
Andrew	11
David G.	23

ODAAT

Al H.	2
Adam J.	3
Cindy D.	3
Daniella M.	4
Michele M.	5
Diana F.	6
Chelsea B.	6
Colleen C.	7
Paul C.	8
Lisa C.	8
Ginny L.	8
Ted H.	11
Michelle R.	12
Christine O.	13
Tom N.	17
Lorrie N.	20
Jack L.	24
Beverly L.	28
Kathy H.	37
Norman G.	38
Ed O.	42
Bobbie D.	42

OSSABAW

Linda R.	8
Nick F.	10
Mark L.	14
Paul T.	17

Royal Palm

David K.	1
Mindy S.	24

Roseland Sebastian Speakers

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Safe Harbor

Donna W.	7
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Sebastian 12 & 12

Sebastian 5:32

Sebastian Lunch Bunch

Doreen.	6
Mark L.	14
Ruthie T.	46

Sebastian Sundowners

Brian I.	3
Debra M.	5
Dale B.	5
Darlene	7
Chandra K.	8
Jeanin D.	14
Paula L.	15

Sebastian Stepsisters

South Vero

Drew S.	1
Mike G.	1
Scott N.	1
Gina A.	3
Mike Mc.	6
Kimberly A.	7
Adam F.	13

Surfside

Phil G.	16
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Vero Beach 12 & 12

Lois W.	2
Bill K.	16
Charlie D.	45
Bob C. (May)	2
Louise W. (May)	4

Vero Beach Group

Vero Beach Men's

Booby W.	3
Brett B.	8
Dave O.	14
Mike C.	41

Vero Beach Step & Tradition

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