

After the Dash, Between the Twelves and Number One

“Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs”. ~ Alcoholics Anonymous, page 20

No matter what I told myself as, defeated and desperate, I stumbled into the rooms of AA. All my focus in my adult life had been stuck on ME: MY career, MY wife, MY kids, even MY God - why?

“Constant thought” . . . even frequent thought . . . “of others” was not part of my repertoire as a dope fiend and a drunk. And in early sobriety (pink cloud type) my ego broke through the surface from deep within to reassert itself.

I mused: “12 Steps - Hmmm - I should be done by 6 months, and a circuit speaker by the end of this first year”. Thankfully God and a helpful member began to reveal the spiritual recovery that is packed into these 12 steps, 12 traditions, and yes, the 12 concepts.

12 step spirituality blends living the program daily - and actively reaching out to others, offering the specific process of this way of life;

“Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress”. ~ Alcoholics Anonymous, page 100

The antidote to my Alcoholic selfishness and self-centeredness has been the pursuit of an honest & loving relationship with God, and the people He sprinkles on my path to Him . . . and also the cracking open of that hard defensive shell that I’ve been hiding in for so long, opened at last to receive the truth about myself from those I’ve loved, but hurt.

“. . .there may be a natural annoyance that a man could be so weak, stupid and irresponsible (not to ‘get it’) . . . you may feel this feeling rising.” ~ Alcoholics Anonymous, page 139

Yes, painfully I must admit that this has been me at times . . . many successful members have had it far worse than I, and still recovered. Who am I to pass judgment on anyone from my position of superiority: Where is God in that? Only He is superior.

“The way our ‘worthy’ Alcoholics have sometimes tried to judge the ‘less worthy’ is . . . rather comical. Imagine . . . one alcoholic judging another!”. ~ The Language of the Heart, page 37

I ask myself, “does that attitude reflect my spiritual awakening; am I placing personalities (mine) before principles”?

“What an order” I exclaimed . . . “Inventory . . . Admit my faults . . . Ask God for help in their removal . . . Step up to amends . . . Increase my focus on conscious contact with God - and prayer”.

The answer - God’s answer - is in service: “I/we only wish to be helpful”.

There is nothing so transforming as to humbly carry this message - of hope - to alcoholics; ready - when they ask.

“When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that, I am responsible”. (The responsibility pledge from the service manual)

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When I first dove into our 3rd legacy my ego's self-will tried mightily to turn this into "me", and that self-will still lurks around the edges. But God is in the center, not those edges.

In service I have usually lost track of me, absorbed instead in the steps I am sharing with another. And though I am devoted to the process, I see the miracle of God revealed, available, and in His healing mode with that newly sober person.

Such an incredible joy - the gift of being close by, within the aura of life returning to the eyes of the other. And the power of God slipping within the mind and heart of that newcomer - once lost, now returned.

My gratitude has no bounds: thank you AA, God, and you, my new sibling in the light of recovery.

And since the 12 steps are spokes in the wheel of recovery, I/we return to step 1 and the unmanageability "after the dash". (Thanks Paula P)

Admitting & accepting powerlessness is not a "pass" for my behavior. Properly applied it is the recognition of the reality of my limitations, and God's unlimited realm of action. Though I have no power to alter reality, with God's strength - and my willing participation - I can alter my attitudes, and thus my behavior.

So: let's roll!

Richard S.
District 5 Chair
Tallahassee



Service Rep Does Your Group Have One?

Service Rep's are welcome at the Intergroup5 monthly meeting - 1st Wednesday every month. Check intergroup5.org website for meeting details.

I am responsible...

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that:

I Am Responsible.



Happy New Year from your Intergroup Chair! I frequently hear people ask, 'What is Intergroup?' I thought it would be good time to discuss what Intergroup is.

Some areas call it Intergroup, some Central Office. Both names are correct. Intergroup functions largely as an information clearing house for the local AA groups and activities. Our Intergroup (Intergroup 5) geographically covers the area from Perry to the Apalachicola River.

Intergroup 5 maintains the local hotline with volunteers working in shifts. We have an awesome hotline coordinator named Evelyn, and she makes sure the hotline has members willing to always answer the phone. Whenever anyone reaches out, we want the hand of AA to be there!

We also maintain the website intergroup5.org. The website has contact information, meeting information, announcements, and a place for both Intergroup 5 and District 5 meeting minutes and treasure's reports. Our website also ties into the free Meeting Guide app, which is a great way to find meetings near you, here and on the road.

Another important function of Intergroup 5 is the literature store. We purchase and sell AA conference approved literature at cost. Local groups and individuals can order literature from the store using the website. We also maintain a large selection of AA pamphlets, which are available at no cost. Our literature store coordinator is Deb, and she would love to help you with your literature needs!

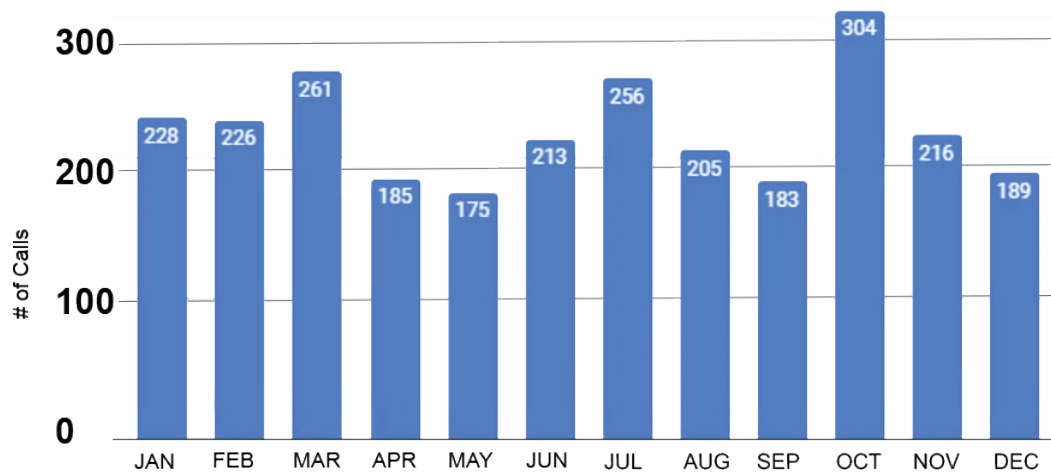
Activities. Intergroup 5 plans and sponsors several workshops and social activities during the year. The past couple of years have been rough, but we hope to have some form of gathering involving food this spring. Keep your eyes peeled! Niki is our activities coordinator and has several ideas ready to go this year.

Finally, Intergroup is a place for representatives of different groups to interface and share information. Do you know what's happening at Central? What is Bradfordville doing on Thursdays? Is Southside still having dinners? Reps from groups share this and more during Intergroup meetings. Some of the information turns into announcements on the Intergroup site, and others are good to know.

We would like to encourage and challenge each group to have somebody represent them at the monthly Intergroup meetings. We meet the first Wednesday of each month, and all meetings are open. We are currently using Zoom for our meetings. The link and log-in information are on the home page of the Intergroup 5 website.

AA HOT LINE CALLS 2021

The local AA Hotline is in concert with AA's 11th Tradition, "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films." We want the hand of AA to always be helpful and supportive to all callers, no matter what their concern.



"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable." ~ *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, page 21

I recently decided to find a second sponsor and work the 12 steps again. It has been almost three years since going through them last in a piecemeal manner. I'm not a "white chip wonder" and all my prior attempts in recovery were riddled with not working the steps, reading and understanding the steps, thinking that I understand, "Yeah, Yeah, I know, I know I'm powerless. I got this." But, undoubtedly discovered I could not have been more further from the truth.

I relapsed with ego still in tact and feeling like, "look at what I can do, I can stop drinking," only to find after a period of time, I could not stay stopped. Today, I understand the concept of powerlessness is not the same as being powerless and accepting the humility of the process.

But this, the third time through the rooms of AA, I've been preoccupied with reading step 1 over and over and sharing some of its words. I'm learning the meaning of powerlessness and about the relation of humility to sobriety. I am learning to recognize when my ego and pride are rearing their ugly heads. And most importantly, I am learning that when they do and then get stepped on, I understand I don't have to drink over it.

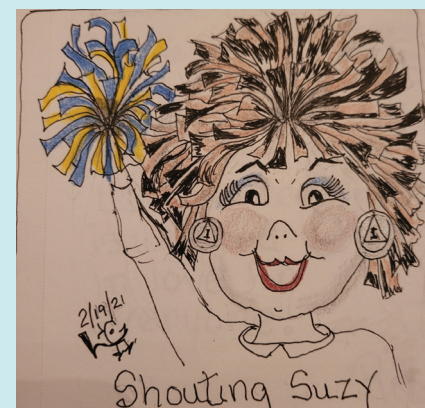
After accepting and believing Step 1, then I am now prepared to believe in a higher power; one higher than my obsession to drink. It can restore me to sanity and further prepares me for what comes next.

Anonymous
Tallahassee

When we join a 12 step program, where no one has a last name. We're often given a "handle" that becomes our claim to fame. So meet some of our new fellows, with "tongue in cheek" good fun. Because when we can laugh with each other, Recovery has begun!



Another New Year and Luke realized that he has been looking through stained glass for many years, but it wasn't until he found AA that he could SEE our beauty too comes from many broken pieces.



"Shouting Suzy"

"CEL-E-BRATE! CEL-E-BRATE! On your special date, we all CEL-E-BRATE!" Even though this is "One Day at a Time;" anniversary day is Suzy's day to shine!

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Intergroup does require funds to operate. We have costs for the phone line, the literature store and storage, the website, registration fees, and more. Some groups make Intergroup a part of their monthly contribution, some groups donate quarterly, bi-annually, or annually, and some individuals will donate during the year. If your group is one of these, we thank you! If your group is not currently donating to Intergroup, we would like you to consider us during your business meetings discussing excess funds. Every little bit helps! No matter what your group does, Intergroup is here for ALL groups in the Big Bend Area.

I am challenging myself and the other officers and members of Intergroup 5 to attend as many of the meetings in our local area, outside our normal schedule, as possible this year. I would love to hear from you!

To contact Intergroup 5 members, go to the website, click the link for contacts, and send us an email. Please join us for the next meeting and think about becoming involved in Intergroup 5 as part of your service commitment.

It is my hope and prayer that this year will be a great year for you!

-Trey M
Intergroup 5 Chair

Intergroup5.org



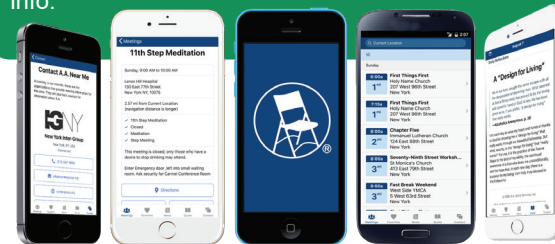
The Intergroup5 Literature Store was busy in 2021, distributing 999 books and 3,012 pamphlets. These numbers include 232 books purchased by the “Pink Can Fund”, 17 books purchased by District 5, and 1,825 pamphlets distributed by District 5 Public Information Officer. Pamphlets are provided free to all meeting groups. The Literature Store has 154 different products available. If you need any items from the Literature store, contact your meeting group’s literature representative.



The “Primary Purpose” of Intergroup 5 is to assist AA groups in District 5 to carry the AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers. These functions are: (1) Providing a 24 hour “Hotline” service; (2) Making available [free pamphlets \(to individuals and groups\) and AA literature for purchase](#); (3) Maintaining a website that provides information on meetings, events, etc. related to AA; and (4) Publishing a newsletter for groups in the AA community. Please submit an article for this newsletter at [intergroup5.org](mailto:message@intergroup5.org) - Editor: message@intergroup5.org

Get Your Own Personal “Where & When”

Download the Meeting Guide App! Intergroup5 has integrated our information with the Meeting Guide App. You can find a link for both Google Play and The Apple Store on the meetings page of Intergroup5.org (<https://intergroup5.org/meetings>). The Meeting Guide can help you find meetings for many areas, including online meeting info.



Meeting Info

Havana Group is now a hybrid meeting
The Havana Sobriety Group is meeting both in-person and on Zoom. They meet every Sunday @ 8:00 pm at the Havana Community center 128 E 7th Ave., Havana FL 32333 (behind the Fire Department)

Sunday - 7:45am - Central Group, 909 N. Gadsden Street. “The Language of the Heart” Meeting. Reading is from Bill W’s Grapevine Writings, *The Language of the Heart*. Books are available at the meeting.

Daily Meetings at:

- Central Group, 909 N. Gadsden Street
- CASA, 2410 Monday Road
- Mustard Seed (except Sunday), 4500 W. Shannon Lakes

Service Opportunity

Intergroup 5 Treasurer

Intergroup 5 has a service opportunity in the Treasurer’s position. It does not require a lot of time each month but does require some attention to detail. This position has a 2-year sobriety requirement, and the commitment is through December of 2023. If this is something you would like to do for service, please contact Trey M, the Intergroup 5 Chair.