



SARA-MANA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

May 2018

Central Office 941.351.4818

AA HELPLINE 941.951.6810

aasrq.org

Thank You Tony

Tony,

Thank you for all of your service throughout the years. Your dedication to the position as office manager of Central Office has not gone unnoticed. You've been there to serve those reaching out in need of an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting and to lend an open ear and heart for those in need. Thank you for such a well-stocked supply of all materials available for the many meetings in the Sarasota/Manatee community. District 4 is also very fortunate to have a central location for all the service entities to carry the message of AA.

I do not want to forget all the volunteers that have made all this possible. Your leadership will always be appreciated.

On a personal note, thank you for all guidance throughout the years. There are not enough words to express the gratitude for your service.

In love and service,
Tom M., D4 Chair

Meditation 101 - Do It

-- Tom S.

A newspaper-publisher friend of mine once told me that the purpose of his column was to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. Perhaps Bill W. had this in mind when he wrote the article, "The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety" – January 1958*. It seems to be addressed to old timers.

In the article, Bill wrote about the hidden Mr. Hyde in his unconscious and how it was necessary for the alcoholic to heal in depth (Spiritual Depth). In my own view, I think of AA as a spiritual journey from self-centeredness (Bill W. said, "The alcoholic is self-centered in the extreme") to God centeredness. The 12 Steps lead us to the gift of sobriety and a spiritual awakening. The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety leads to "The Promises" and God Centeredness.

This awakening came early for me. In the same year that I joined AA, I met the founder of Divorced & Separated Catholics of Long Island and she became a spiritual sponsor for me. For 37 years, I've followed a practice similar to the "quiet times" Bill and Dr. Bob followed. My current spiritual sponsor is a retired monk, and he tells me that "God's first language is silence" and "Everything else is a poor translation" – not bad. After years of study, I've decided that no one can adequately explain meditation to anyone else. You learn it by doing it.

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Meditation 101

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My main obstacle to God centered-ness is my own intellect. It always wants to be in charge. Like Bill and Bob, as I begin my "quiet times," I read some divinely inspired literature. That serves to satisfy my intellect. Then, I close my eyes and sit in silence in God's healing presence, for 20 or 30 minutes, letting all though pass by like little boats on a river.

After several years and a few refinements, my home AA group (Scarsdale, NY) adopted the above as their guide for a group meditation practice. Their "inspired reading" was the 11th Step Prayer, the Prayer of St. Francis, which was read slowly and reverently twice (as Bill suggested) followed by 20 minutes of silence and sharing. That year was 2000. This practice later was adopted by Bronxville, New York City, St. Louis, Manila and other groups. One day, several friends I knew who were atheists asked if they could attend. I said of course. I called my monk friend looking for some profound advice, and he said, "Just have them sit in silence and let God introduce Himself." I guess we can call that Meditation 102.

The simplest meditation booklet for beginners that I've ever seen is available free from Contemplative Outreach, P.O. Box 737, Butler, NJ 07405. It's meant for the incarcerated, but it's easy to follow. The title of the booklet is "Locked Up and Free."

I never looked for immediate benefits from my silent meditations, but I do feel they have a positive effect on my daily life and are responsible for the appearance (in God's time) of some if not all of the 12 Promises. The key suggestion is "Do It." A loving God does the heavy lifting.

*Reprinted with Permission of AAWS in Appendix A of *Divine Therapy & Addiction: Centering Prayer and the 12 Steps*, published by Lantern Books, New York.

Volunteers Needed!

"The unity of the Fellowship of the spirit can be ours so long as we are willing to pass it on."

Looking for an opportunity to provide service? The Men's Recovery Pod at the Manatee County Jail is in need of volunteers to bring the message. Volunteers are needed immediately as "snowbirds" migrate north and other volunteers step down.

Applicants should have worked the steps with a sponsor, have a minimum of one year sobriety and have no "paper" for 5 years (if you don't know what "paper" is, don't worry about it!).

For more information please call Jim J @630.638.3844

STEPPING UP TO SERVE



At April's Intergroup meeting, two members of our fellowship volunteered to give back by filling two important positions:

Current Practices Chair
Joe

Helpline Chair
Anne R.

THANK YOU!

Upcoming event? New meeting, new time, new format? Care to share your experience, strength and hope in writing?

LET YOUR FELLOW AAers KNOW.
Send it to newsletter@AAsrq!

Best of

Dear Alkie,

"Alkie" is a long-time member of A.A. His comments are based on his own strength, hope, and experience and are not reflections of any official A.A. position or practice.

Q. Dear Alkie: AA doesn't work. I went to two of your stupid meetings but I'm still drinking.

Alkie: Don't just go to AA, PARTICIPATE!!

Q. Dear Alkie: I hate what I do, and who I am, when I drink. Can AA help?

Alkie: To keep from being the person I used to be, I work the steps and go to meetings.

Q. Dear Alkie: What can you tell me about your drinking and your experience in AA?

Alkie: I first drank for fun, then out of habit, and finally, out of necessity. I then came to AA out of necessity, then out of habit, and now for the fun of it!

Q. Dear Alkie: I've been coming to meetings, and feel like I belong, but I just don't understand a whole lot of what's going on.

Alkie: Hang in there. As soon as I started coming to AA, I felt plugged in, but it took awhile before the light came on.

Q. Dear Alkie: The old-timers keep telling me to take the cotton out of my ears and put it in my mouth. Why?

Alkie: We first learn to listen, then listen to learn.

Q. Dear Alkie: I need several drinks to get loose, to get social, so I'm a "social drinker," right?

Alkie: If you have to drink to get social, you're not a social drinker.

WHERE & WHEN

SaraMana Intergroup offers 295 meetings per week. The most current meeting list has been printed on WHITE 11x17 paper and includes changes submitted prior to April 21, 2018.

If you would like to submit changes to existing meetings or include a new meeting, you can find the "Meeting Change Form" on the SaraMana website, www.aasrq.org. Once you submit a change, you will see the change made to the "Where & When All Meetings" file on the website. As far as the 11x17 paper version, changes will be included in the next mass printing cycle (usually 3 to 4 times per year).

The website also offers meetings by area that can be printed on 8 1/2 x 11 paper:

- North Manatee (Palmetto, Ellenton, Parrish)
- Bradenton
- Lakewood Ranch
- Keys & Island (Siesta Key, St Armands, Longboat Key, Holmes Beach, Anna Maria Island)
- Sarasota
- Nokomis
- Spanish Meetings
- Telephone Meetings

Idea! Take a screen shot from your smart phone, so you always have a meeting list on you.

From My Journal

by Nancy B.



Live and Let Live, what a brilliant concept for a fellowship and for our lives, as recent events in our communities and country in the last few years has shown. It has been easier, much easier, for me to feel OK about people outside of AA by applying AA's principle of live and let live.

Early in my sobriety, I had the benefit of observing one or two regulars at my meetings who did not follow the tradition of avoiding political comments and strong religious opinions, and I experienced my own strong reaction of a sudden loss of respect for them. It was quite remarkable: One minute, I felt the spirit of AA acceptance, love and a great regard for the person. Then, suddenly, after hearing her viewpoint, I thought she was a jerk.

I react differently now with more time under my belt and with the understanding that my reaction was my character defect – not hers. I learned in a profound way the importance of the principle to live and let live, personally as well as globally. And spiritually too, for an opinion is just that, an emotional take on something at that very brief moment in time which means so little in the infinite nature of existence.

Founders Day 2018 Saturday, June 9th



Sarasota Community Church

TICKETS: \$18

On sale at Central Office

MAY AA MILESTONES

- 1935** On a business trip to Ohio, Bill W. finds himself in a hotel lobby craving a drink. Bill W. & Dr. Bob meet for the first time.
- 1938** Bill W. and others begin writing the Big Book
- 1951** Al-Anon founded by Lois W. and Anne B.
- 1980** *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers* was published.

Back of the Book

A Brand New End

--Edgar C.

Bill Wilson often said that the testimonial stories in the back of the Big Book might prove to be more valuable in achieving sobriety than the main text of that book.

The following is the key thought from "Safe Haven" (page 452, 4th edition):

"From experience, I've realized that I cannot go back and make a brand new start. But from A.A., I can start from now and make a brand-new end."

Sara-Mana Meeting Breakdown

Spring 2018

Day	Total Meetings	Big Book	Step, T, 12&12	ABSI, DRef, GV, LS, Lit	Speaker	Meditation	Discussion, Beginners
Mon	49	10	2	5	0	1	31
Tue	46	7	7	4	2	1	25
Wed	43	4	4	2	3	2	28
Thu	47	4	13	5	2	2	21
Fri	44	6	5	6	3	2	22
Sat	37	1	0	4	4	1	27
Sun	29	1	2	3	4	3	16

ANNIVERSARIES

Groups: Please email birthdays to newsletter@AAsrq.org and put **ANNIVERSARIES** in the subject line. Cutoff for the newsletter is the last day of the month. Anniversaries will appear the month after they occur (ie., May anniversaries will appear in June). In this issue, unless otherwise noted, anniversaries are for April.

Gulf Gate Noon		Serentiy Room	
Awe W.	11 years	Dave G.	26years
Bill	29 years	Nivy	4 years
Bob K.	42 years	Ricky H.	26years
Kathi B.	36 years	Tom G.	10years
Mika B.	1 year	Trudge S.	41years
Rob F.	2 years		
Palmetto Group of AA		Singleness of Purpose	
Gene W.	5 years	Marvin C.	10 years
		Mike B.	3 years
Primary Porpoise		Sunrise Group	
Joan F.	12 years	Brook J.	16 years
Kumar M.	5 years	Mitch P.	12 years
Scott R.	1 year	Paul S.	9 years
Monday Night North River		Women in the Solution	
Gail T.	34 years	<i>March</i>	
		Lisa	7 years
Pass It On		Shelly	43 years
Donna W.	3 years	<i>April</i>	
Jo Bell	32 years	Llnda P.	35 years
Tony C.	33 years	Lisa	9 years
		Molly	7 years

Original Big Book Manuscript Auctioned for \$2.4 Million

--Edgar C.

The original manuscript of Alcoholics Anonymous, known to adherents as the Big Book, sold at auction recently for 2.4 million dollars to Indianapolis Colts owner Jim Irsay, according to an Associated Press report.

The auction house Profiles in History announced the sale of the manuscript with handwritten notes from the group's founding fathers.

Irsay told The Associated Press he plans to build a special display for the manuscript and display it for several months a year at A.A. headquarters in New York. He says he is thrilled at the opportunity to share it publicly. Irsay said he considers himself a steward for the manuscript, which he said he may also send out on tour so it can be seen by more people.

Irsay said he considered remaining anonymous about purchasing the manuscript, but wanted to go public to try to relieve the stigma of alcoholism and addiction.

"The only way we stay sober is to give it away," Irsay said. "I think it'll help a lot of people," he said. "That's the reason I'm doing it." He said he attended his first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting 25 years ago, and marvels at the reach of the organization and what its founders built.

Central Office Space

T: 941.351.4818 E: info@aasrq.org

Central Office Fund Drive

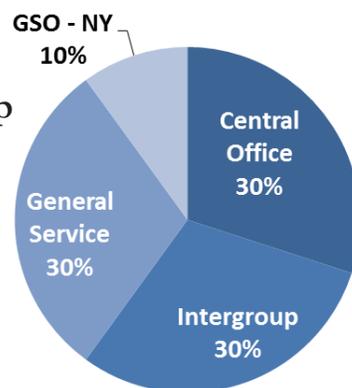
The Central Office Fund Drive ended April 16th. We met our goal, and contributions totaled **\$30,734.00** Thank you everyone for your generous contributions!

Summer Hours

Central Office is now operating on summer hours (May 1 - September 30):

Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
<i>Open for Intergroup Meeting (7pm to 8pm)</i>	
Wednesday	Open 9am to 4pm
Thursday	Open 9am to 4pm
Friday	Open 9am to 4pm
Saturday	Closed
<i>Open for General Service Meeting (9am to 12pm)</i>	

Suggested Group Contributions



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