



On the web at aasrq.org

# Sara-Mana Intergroup

P.O. Box 3075 1748 Independence Blvd., #B2, Sarasota, FL

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

JANUARY 2015

Central Office (941) 351-4818

Sara-Mana District 4, Area 15

## Surrendering on Her Knees Twice a Day Brought Her Sobriety

By Angela I.

On Step 2 in treatment, my counselor saw me down on one knee picking up a book. He said, "Why not try that on both knees? You are one of the arrogant ones!"

I was so confused, in great emotional pain, so I decided to take his suggestion. I waited until my roommate was outside having a cigarette, and got down on my knees. Immediately I felt warm and safe and knew that there was a Higher Power in my life, just awaiting my acknowledgment.

So for the last 28 years, I have done that physical act of surrender, down on my knees, last thing before going to bed and first thing upon getting up.

I have not had a relapse in 28 years; maybe it helps to surrender twice a day.

### Finds Courage to Change

## How Gratitude Replaced Her Anger

By Dee T.

For me, Dec. 31 was a day of reflection and happiness. I usually get a little melancholy on this day, but this New Year's Eve was different. I lost my husband Dec. 9, 2011 and 64 days before him, my mother passed. I spent two whole years being very angry.

During my first year, I had no clue I was as angry as I was until a friend of 21 years pointed out that I was judgemental and critical of others. What she failed to realize is since Oct. 14 1994 I had not picked up



*The latest in underwear*

## Here's What to Do When You're Lonely

I have found that the more I participate in service of others, the less self pity and loneliness I have. I love and need my time alone today and actually prefer it a lot of time! But I also know that I must give back, and I can only do that by interacting with others. One of the best places to do that is at meetings where I can find folks in need of a kind or encouraging word. — Ilene K.

alcohol or narcotics, and no cigarettes since April 24 1997. I have not shopped my feelings away, eaten them away, gambled them away, sexed them away, nor did I stop attending meetings or pray, but I was ANGRY. It was the best I could do at the time.

Now it was 3 years and 23 days later on Dec. 31 and I have realized this past year I wasn't as angry as previously. God and the program gave me the courage to pull the trigger on a permanent move from up north to Florida where I have purchased land,

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## Central Office 2015 Fund Drive Underway, Goal Is \$30,000

Once again we are asking Individual A.A. members to send a contribution to support your Central Office. It is this contribution that enables us to maintain what we feel is the best Central Office in South Florida.

If you are a newer member of AA or do not know what it is a central office does, flyers, pamphlets and guidelines are available to answer your questions. You can find this information at the office and there are flyers available at your meetings during the fund drive.

Simply put, it is the Central Office of A.A. for the 4<sup>th</sup> district of area 15. The office operates and maintains our website. It is where the help line is. It is a clearing house for information relating to A.A. in our district as well as a means of sharing information with Intergroup/Central Offices thruout the U.S. and Canada. It is a place where our District and Intergroup committees can meet and conduct their business.

We supply Conference Approved A.A. literature to our groups, members and the public. We also have a section of not yet approved literature and medallions for sale which is necessary to supplement income.

Envelopes for mailing your contributions are available at your groups and of course, the office. We are not asking you to give a lot. If everyone would consider what a night of drinking cost (even without the DUI) and send it in we would make our goal of \$30,000 easily. We know you will make this year's Fund Drive a success and thank you in advance for your continued support.

## Back of the Book

### Acceptance Was The Answer

*The stories in the back of Alcoholics Anonymous, which Bill Wilson thought were the most important part of the Big Book, are often overlooked. Readers are invited to supply a favorite thought or theme from a story, as Jody K has done below.*

This is my favorite story in the Big Book. One day at a time, it has helped me through so many different situations. Problems disappeared when I began living in the answer. The solution is called ACCEPTANCE. My serenity is contingent upon accepting people, places, and situations as they are because nothing happens in God's world by mistake. Accepting life on life's terms allows me to experience happiness. I need to change ME, not you. The key to my relationship with God is acceptance and not expectations. I accept the results of every facet of my life as God's will for me.

### The Rubber Band in "Gutter Bravado"

Doug of the Gulf Gate Noon Group commented on the story in the back of the Big Book, "Gutter Bravado." His attempts to quit drinking, like the story's author, had been like a rubber band. He said he would get stretched out in Alcoholics Anonymous, then snap right back into drinking like the writer of that story. Today, that rubber band has lost its snap for Doug.

## A.A. Manners—Concluding Part 2 of 2

### Meeting Etiquette Suggestions

By Ross B

4) Anonymity - Once broken it can't be unbroken. We say in meetings, "Who you see here, what you hear here, let it stay here, when you leave here." Many of us are wary, especially when we're new, about others finding out we're in A.A. Also, sharing personal matters may make us feel vulnerable. So we need to be able to feel safe when we share. Who I saw at a meeting and what they shared, is not my business. That means I shouldn't be talking about it after the fact, even with another member who attended the same meeting. It's the business of the person who shared it in the first place. If they want to talk about it afterwards, that is their prerogative, not mine.

5) Gratitude – Do service for your home group and A.A. It is as important to your recovery as coming to meetings and working the Steps. Also, show your gratitude by thanking the speaker/chairperson, coffee maker, etc., after the meeting for their service. It's nice to be appreciated.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, I confess I have been guilty of violating every suggestion I've penned in these articles. However, I am going to keep striving to improve. Step 6 tells me I'm supposed to abandon limited objectives and aim for perfection, which is of God.

I have to remember to do my part, which is not to drink a day at a time and live according to the spiritual principles which form the bases of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. When I do that, God invariably does his part, which is to take care of me.



*Each of the 12 Steps is related to a principle of good character, which in turn generate the good habits that help A.A.s carry the message to other alcoholics. Above is a suggested list of principles, starting with Step 1 at the bottom of the staircase.*

### She Embraces "Living Usefully"

By Keli I

At a meeting recently, we read the 12th Step from the 12 x 12 and even though I've read it lots of times before, it felt like the first time I'd ever read it. What stood out most was the sentence, "True ambition is the deep desire to live usefully and walk humbly under the grace of God."

Being 'right-sized' does not come naturally to me, I'm ambitious and driven; learning to be of service, to be a worker among workers isn't what I intuitively do. I've found now that unless I take that perspective, the pain of being ego-driven is so great that I'm driven back to the Steps, that joy for me comes from the true ambition to live usefully and walk humbly under the grace of God, and not from my old ideas of success.

I have surrendered my will and I show up and do the next indicated thing, trusting and knowing that all will turn out exactly as it should.

### How Gratitude Replaced Anger

*(Continued. from Page 1)*

am having a new house built, now have a new job, found great meetings of all types, and I also have a church family which is very important for me.

What I felt this Dec. 31 was gratitude for not giving up on myself and the GIFT to stay sober for another 364 days. What I have is priceless; it is only through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, the fellowship and the God of my understanding that I get to feel this.

I wish this for anyone struggling.

*"And now that you don't have to be perfect, you can be good."—John Steinbeck. East of Eden*

## 140 at New Year's Bash; Chairman Tom M. Says Thanks to All

By Tom M. *Outgoing Events Chair*  
Attendance was about 140 guests at the New Year's Eve event. They heard two wonderful speakers, Christine and Joe M.

I would like to express my gratitude to so many people who made New Year's Eve special as well as all the events we have presented over the last two years. The list includes Kimberly W., Janie H., Jane D., Mary M., Robert W., the Grapevine committee, Archives committee, and it goes without saying, thanks to Chef Paul and his entire staff for the wonderful dinners provided.

Thank you all for allowing me to serve you as Events Chair for the last two years. There was to be a brief wrap up meeting on January 21.

Hopefully, there is someone in our A.A. community that will find the interest to fill the position of Events Chair.

I will be available to assist that individual in the transition. Again thank you all for the opportunity to serve.

## What Does Serenity Mean to You?

For me, serenity isn't the lack of storms, it is peace during a storm.

Life is going to happen with or without me. Serenity is a gift, it's the ability to be calm, trust in God and have faith that the outcome is going to be okay no matter what it is.

It's my acceptance of the things I have no power over, courage to change what I can and knowing the difference between those two. I might not like what's going on or even be scared but I have the serenity to know that no matter what, I am going to be okay. —Patricia R

**You don't get better by just sitting in meetings because you can't absorb the program through ass-mosis.**



## Reads Through the Big Book and Finds Hope, Then Sobriety

By Anonymous

I had no intention of going to A.A. when I hit bottom. I'd been around A.A. when I was a kid because my dad was a member, and I thought I knew what it was about. So instead, I suffered through the next five months trying to quit drinking forever. I'd make it a few weeks then drink, rinse, and repeat.

I was in so much emotional pain that I wanted to die.

Finally, someone suggested that if I wasn't willing to go to A.A., I at least could get the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and read it. I met with a sober friend who gave me a book and a meeting schedule along with words of encouragement.

I read the book and saw a lot of similarities. A couple of weeks later, I was in an AA meeting where I finally felt at home and found some hope. I also found some willingness to let go of my old idea that I could get sober and stay sober by myself.

It's not been easy but it's been well worth the trip. I am happily sober today, and I no longer want to drink or die.

## Get This Newsletter Delivered to You by Email

Get your Sara-Mana Newsletter emailed to you as a PDF. Email [secretary@AAsrq.org](mailto:secretary@AAsrq.org) and ask to be added to the email list.

## 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. I was taught that A.A. is a WE program – I can't get sober by myself. Lately, some jokers in my home group have been calling it a ME program. What's the right way to look at A.A.?**

A. If you're anything like me, your mind is like a bad neighborhood; you should never go there alone. When you're learning how to deal with your alcoholism from your sponsor and the fellowship, the WE mode is the only way to go. When you are reaching out through twelfth step work, remember to be in the ME mode for self-protection. Your sobriety is priority one even if your sponsee fails.

**Q. Drugs and alcohol are taking over my life, and I can't seem to quit. Can A.A. help me?**

A. It's said that an alcoholic is just a drug addict with a limited imagination. A.A. can definitely help you start in recovery – the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop drinking. But, please respect our fifth tradition of primary purpose and limit your comments in meetings to your alcoholism.

**Q. My grandmother called me a "dipsomaniac," so I told the old bat my sex life was none of her business. But, what did she mean?**

A. The term Dipsomania was coined almost 200 years ago to describe a medical condition involving the periodic uncontrollable craving for large amounts of alcohol, which today we call binge drinking. The concept was important for promoting the disease theory of alcoholism and not a moral failing or lack of self-control. Next time you talk to Granny, you can tell her she is very perspicacious – look it up.

# ANNIVERSARIES

Groups: email birthdays to newsletter@AAsrq.org and put ANNIVERSARIES in the subject line. Cutoff for the newsletter is the last day of the month. Do not send anniversaries for future months: i.e. February anniversaries appear in March.

## 63rd Ave. November

Benjamin B. 30 yrs  
Mary M. 1  
**December**  
Suzanne G. 27  
Judy S. 16  
Eileen Q. 12  
Sarah S. 12  
Debbie VB 5  
Dave C. 4

## Attitude Adjustment October

Ron E. 34  
Mark A. 31  
Ginny F. 31  
Monique J. 28  
Tom G. 16  
John C. 15  
Don B. 10  
**November**  
Gordon B. 48  
Walt M. 26  
Ali D. 24  
Denise K. 22  
Susan S. 18  
Joan P. 18  
Dana D. 6  
Bob B. 2  
**December**  
Karen E. 33  
Elaine 32  
Jeff B. 12

## Bee Ridge East November

Greta T. 27  
Mary M. 27  
Walt M. 26  
**December**  
Ursula K. 27

## EarlyBigBook November

Patty D. 43  
Anne M. 30  
Gus G. 23  
Kim C. 9  
Carl P. 9  
Holly S. 3  
Katherine H. 2  
Clarissa Z. 1

## Early Bird Group November

Homer H. 24

## From the Heart

Johan P. 38

## Gulf Gate Noon November

Art F. 25  
Chris L. 8  
Nancy 8  
Marita 5

## December

Jack 18  
Elizabeth 4

## Happy Cookie Hour

### OCTOBER

Ron E. 34  
Jerry C. 20  
Marianne J. 16  
Sharon E. 12  
Joe B.

### November

Jimmy J. 30  
Mary Ann 13  
Susan O. 12  
Trudy M. 11  
Lorie 8  
Tony P. 4  
Robin O. 3  
Holly S. 3  
Charlie 2

## L'wood Ranch 12&12

### October

Frank Mc. 12  
Lester G. 4

### November

Patty D. 43  
Jim M. 34  
Joyce C. 5

## Monday Nite Mens October

Harry G. 22  
**November**

Fred P. 27  
Jeff A. 23

## December

Mike T. 18

## Oasis

### November

Homer H. 24  
Lane H. 6  
Paul B. 4  
Brian K. 4

## Primary Porpoise November

Don L. 31  
John F. 28  
Ishmael 25

## St. Armand's Noon

### November

George M. 40  
Mary H. 39  
Mary Jane L. 39  
Jerry W. 27  
Heather C. 7  
Nani M. 3

### December

Dick D. 33  
Joop V. 24  
Yolande W. 12  
Pat P. 8  
Lisa M. 7  
Bob M. 6  
Don S. 3

## Serenity Room November

Frank A. 34  
Terry S. 27  
Keli G. 13  
Peter F. 2  
Carol B. 2  
Brian G. 2

## December

Don M. 37  
Pete F. 28  
Dane S. 7  
Michelle H. 6  
Tracy P. 4  
Dee A. 1

## Sunrise

### November.

Stephen P. 35  
Bob R. 8  
Rich C. 4

### December

John Q. 37  
Dan B. 32  
Morey B. 29  
Susie T. 16  
Phil S. 9  
Louise S. 7  
Al R. 5  
Steven Y. 3

## Third Legacy Men's

### November

Jim C. 29  
**December.**  
Billy B. 9

## Woman Of Hope November

Ruth F. 41  
Allison B. 16  
Joyce C. 5

## December

Betty M. 32  
Wendy E. 32  
Kathy M. 24  
Mary Ellen 5  
Sophie 3  
Patty J. 1  
Kate C. 1  
Leslie L. 1

## Upcoming Events:

## Golf Tourney

**Feb. 2**

**Prizes**

**Galore!**

Time is running out  
Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup>  
2015, 8:30AM Tee  
Time @ The River  
Club Golf & Country  
Club 6600 River Club  
Blvd Bradenton FL  
34202

Get your foursome  
together and send in  
your registration fee  
\$85.00/ Golfer  
Fee includes 4 Person  
Scramble, Range  
Balls, Lunch & prizes  
for EVERYONE!  
Extra prizes for:  
Closest to the pin,  
Long Drive, Long Putt  
& Proximity Shot.  
Make checks payable  
to; Groundhog Day  
Open:

Mail to Groundhog  
Day Open  
5612 90<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Circle East, Parrish,  
FL 34219

You may also pay at  
the Central Office.  
Credit Cards are  
accepted @ the office.

## Keep It Green

## Group Goes Black

ATTENTION!!!  
The Keep It Green  
Group which met on  
Saturday night at 5:30  
on Longboat Key has  
closed after 10 years.

**The main purpose of this newsletter is to inform, connect and entertain.** TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER:

Anniversaries, articles and meeting notices should be sent to newsletter@AAsrq.org. Submit material as attachments or directly in an email. Include your first name, group and type of item being sent.

Deadline is the last day of the month. Submissions may be edited for length or content. Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of A.A., Sara-Mana Intergroup or the Central Office, located at #B-2, 1748 Independence Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34234. Phone 941.351.4818.

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**ANNIVERSARIES** in the subject line when  
you email entries for notice here, else they get  
lost amid the spam & junk