



# 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."

My experience with the 12<sup>th</sup> step is this: I need a higher power (God of my understanding), a formal set of spiritual principles by which to live ( the 12 steps ), a sponsor ( to guide me through working these 12 steps), and new members of AA ( to allow me to take them through the 12 steps myself).

Without the incomprehensible demoralization of alcoholism, I never would have found this new manner of living. I was the type of alcoholic who loved to party, bury the problem (actually to drown it), procrastinate and deny the inevitable negative consequences, and then somehow try to wiggle out of it or blame someone else. That "program" didn't work very well long term and eventually caught up to me. I am grateful for the pain of the end of my drinking because I didn't want to accept my disease and that my way didn't work.

Unfortunately I am a slow learner. I loved AA as soon as I walked into my first meeting with my sponsor. Prior to my surrender, I had known him and his wife and recognized that they had a certain sparkle. I knew that they didn't drink and they always seemed to be having the most fun at any event we both attended. I wanted what they had and eventually was willing to go to a certain length to get it. Note the half measure built into that sentence.

I called him at work one day and asked for help. He talked to me for a long time. I cried and whined about my problems. He listened patiently and eventually told me to meet him at his office at the end of the day. I did and we met in his car in the parking lot. He handed me a big book and said to try to read the first 164 pages and to try not to drink over the weekend. He then told me his story which was eerily identical to mine. That was a Friday.

I prayed to God to keep me from a drink over the weekend and it worked! I tried to read as much of the book as I could, comprehending little and remembering less. I did identify with Bill's story though. He then took me to his home group that Monday evening and I stated my name and that I was an alcoholic. I'm not sure I believed it but I said it and wanted relief. I felt very welcome and surprisingly at home at my first meeting. In fact, a patient of mine said, "Hey Dave, we've been waitin' for ya!" That was humbling but thought provoking. Maybe I wasn't as much under the radar as I thought in regards to my drinking and behavior.

After a quick acceptance on a superficial level of the first three steps, I balked. It took me 8 months to actually put pen to paper to write my 4<sup>th</sup> step. Once I was ready, I was done in 2 hours. Too bad I'm such a hardhead. My 5<sup>th</sup> step, immediately followed by 6 and 7 right out of the book, as suggested in the book, and by my sponsor resulted in one of the most memorable and peaceful days of my life. I levitated out of St Helen church where I said the 7<sup>th</sup> step prayer for the first time. I truly felt a part of AA. That was a profound awakening for me. And then I balked...again. I went to a lot of meetings, didn't drink, did service work, not surprisingly I had only a few drive by sponsees who got drunk, and procrastinated on step 8. That went on for 3 years I'm sad to say. Then the pain got bad enough again and I was back into action. I wrote my 8<sup>th</sup> step list and began to make my 9<sup>th</sup> step amends with the guidance of my sponsor. I did this to the best of my ability and got great results. I stayed sober and grew in the fellowship. I got very committed to my home group and practiced steps 10-12 daily and grew spiritually as a result. I sponsored a lot of guys and took them through the steps. I got a lot more than I gave and still believe that taking another alcoholic through the steps, particularly the 5<sup>th</sup>, is one of the greatest honors I have ever been given. I know the day I did 5-7 was a truly spiritual experience and each time I guide a sponsee through that portion of the steps, I get that same feeling.

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# 12 TWELVE XII

## **Tradition 12:**

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to put principles over personalities.

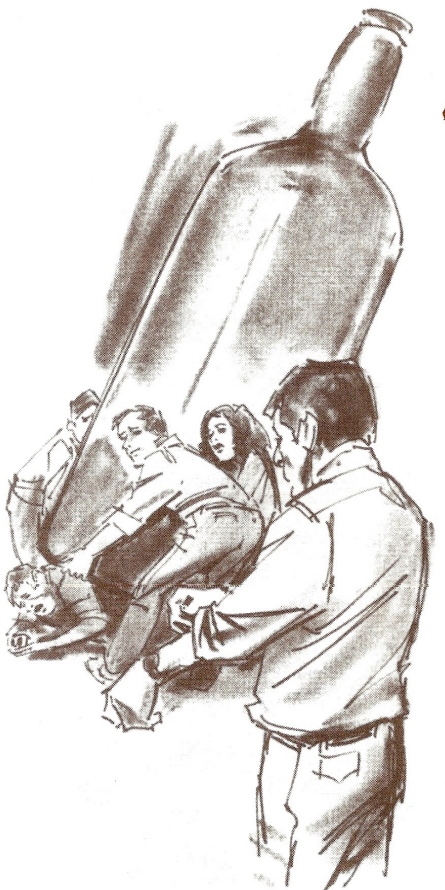
## **Concept XII :**

The Conference shall serve the spirit of AA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reaches all important decisions by discussion, vote, & whenever possible by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never performs acts of government; and like the Society it serves always remain democratic in thought and action

## **Step 12—Service:**

“Having experienced a psychic change that keeps us sober one day at a time, we’re empowered to demonstrate the new principles by which we live. We remain in action in our daily life through example. We seek out and are available to help others in need. We continue to carry the message of hope and recovery. We strive to help wherever we can even in the smallest simple tasks of life.

**12** *Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*



I live by these Steps and get better.  
I try to help other alcoholics.

## **Traditions Checklist**

1. Why is it a good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before Individual welfare? What would happen to me if AA disappeared?
2. When I don't trust AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?

3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than the desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to **my** standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition-or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a *Grapevine* subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs behavior-especially if they're paid to work for AA? Who made **me** so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret or reveal it in a private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)?
12. What is the real importance of me among more than a million AAs?

The only problem is that I hadn't been fearless and thorough with one entity on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> steps. It never even occurred to put the IRS on that list. Some of my old behavior had continued into sobriety and I simply looked the other way. My feeling was that everyone else was doing it so I could too. After all, I was sober and active in AA sponsoring 6 guys at the time.

After a very ugly and personal break up of my business, I found myself financially wrecked at 10 years sober. I was afforded the opportunity to plead guilty to a felony for filing an incorrect tax return I had filed at 5 years sober. The very week I pled guilty I prayed to God to help me by giving me someone to help in AA. Two guys approached me and asked me to take them through the steps that week! He is always there for me and this program always works in any and all conditions. Taking those two men through the steps saved my sanity and kept me fully engaged in AA when I needed it the most in my time in sobriety.

I was sentenced to Federal prison and went at 11.5 years sober. I never needed AA more. My wife and family, sponsor, home group, and AA in general were totally supportive and helped me through a very difficult time. I got visits from my sponsor and his wife, sponsees, and an amazing wife and family who live by these spiritual principles. I had fears that my marriage and business would fail. On the contrary, they are stronger than ever. Again, the pain had been the touchstone of my spiritual growth.

While in prison, I received mountains of mail from AA's and related folks who had been through tough times and the prayers and empathy and support were invaluable. I also had an amazing experience my first day in prison. I was really angry that there was no AA or recovery of any kind in place. I was so disappointed and surprised that there were not even any informal inmate led meetings. I was told by the administration that the meetings led by outside AA's were discontinued due to lack of inmate interest. Unbelievable!

However, I had another spiritual experience as mentioned on my first day there. It was 18 degrees outside and I had missed the chance to get my uniform and coat. I was still in a thin white jumpsuit and freezing and scared. I noticed a "12 step recovery support group" signup sheet on the bulletin board in my unit. Mine was the only name on it. I went to the library to try to find any recovery literature to try to calm down and center. I found a Daily Reflections. I went back to my unit to try to read and pray and noticed another name on the signup sheet...Larry H.

The unit was really cold so I went back to the library to warm up. There were several guys in there playing cards and they began incessant questions about personal information. I was not interested in telling them much and was very wary so I let them know I was done with the "20 questions."

Just then a man who had been quietly sitting in a corner of the room stood up. He was 6' 7" and very intimidating. He walked over to me and extended a massive hand and asked, "Are you Dave O?" I nodded and he smiled a huge smile. He then asked if I was a friend of Bill W's. I said I was and he smiled again. He then said, "My name is Larry H and so am I. You'll be fine. Stick with me."

Larry and I became friends and he helped me to adjust to prison life. He is a very spiritual man and we sponsored one another through some of the low days that occur in prison. We started a meeting and called it the Razor Wire Group. When I was released in late June, I had celebrated 12 years and Larry had celebrated 15. We had about 5 regulars at the meeting and although it was hard to stick to the 12 traditions in the prison setting, we did our best. God, AA, the new guys, and Larry helped save my sanity and kept me sober one day at a time. Before I left, I challenged the new guys to keep the meeting alive as a vital part of my own sobriety has been carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. There is no doubt in my mind that the spiritual experiences I have had in the last few years are a direct result of my active participation in Alcoholics Anonymous. I am so grateful.

Join us for the **Christmas Alcathon** at the  
Newport Club - Festive Fellowship, Eat & Meet



2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Vero Beach Mens
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	ODAAT
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Hibiscus Thursday Night
8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	South Vero
10:00 -12:00 a.m.	Royal Palm Group
12:00 – 2:00 a.m.	I Am Responsible
2:00 – 4:00 a.m.	Noontime Recovery
4:00 – 6:00 a.m.	Indian River Womens
6:00 – 8:00 a.m.	Safe Harbor
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Friday Night Young People
10:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Easy Does It
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.	Vero Beach Group
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Vero Beach Men's

And then the **New Year's Alcathon**

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Candlelight
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	King's Highway
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Hibiscus Thursday Night
8:00 – 10:00 p.m.	Safe Harbor
10:00 -12:00 a.m.	Royal Palm Group
12:00 – 2:00 a.m.	I Am Responsible
2:00 – 4:00 a.m.	Friday Night Young People
4:00 – 6:00 a.m.	Vero Beach Mens
6:00 – 8:00 a.m.	ODAAT
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	South Vero
10:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Noontime Recovery
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.	Vero Beach Group
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Candlelight

## 2012 OFFICE ACTIVITY

### Calls for Assistance and Walk-Ins

#### Nature of Calls

	JULY	AUG	SEPT	3RD Q	OCT	NOV	DEC	4TH Q	1ST Q	2ND Q
12th Step Support	9	19	5	33	14	13			46	31
General Info/Misc	50	66	55	171	67	75			175	194
Purchases	85	69	115	269	64	59			282	229
Meeting Info	41	23	29	93	37	37			176	122
Alanon / NA	10	5	8	23	7	12			40	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>196</b>			<b>718</b>	<b>607</b>

## Gate Lodge

	Tuesday 8:30 pm		Thursday 8:30 pm		Saturday 8:30 pm
	Speaker		Speaker		Speaker
				12/15	Indian Rive Women's
12/18	A New Day	12/20	I Am Responsible	12/22	Fri night Young People
12/25	Easy Does It	12/27	Candlelight	12/29	South Vero
1/1	Noontime	1/3	Indian Rive Men's	1/5	Indian River Thursday
1/8	South Vero	1/10	Roseland	1/12	OSSABAW

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**

**\*\*BHC\*\* - MONDAYS AT 7PM**

<b>12/17</b>	<b>Lunch Bunch</b>	<b>12/24</b>	<b>Vero Beach men's</b>	<b>12/31</b>	<b>Indian River men's</b>
<b>1/7</b>	<b>Vero Beach men's</b>	<b>1/14</b>	<b>Indian River men's</b>		

*\*This facility requires 2 years of Sobriety for visiting AAs*

## December 2012 BIRTHDAYS

# 965Years Of CONTINUOUS Sobriety!



### AA Only

Jeff R. ....5

### Barefoot Bay Group

Janet W. ....1  
Timothy G. ....11  
Carol S. ....28  
Joann. ....28  
Sandy A. ....20  
John MCG. ....39  
Al F. ....44

### Candlelight Group November

Jason P. ....4  
Mike H. ....10  
Donnie J. ....22

### Candlelight Group December

Tom R. ....23  
Tom W. ....26

### Lunch Bunch Group

Carl D. ....37

### I am Responsible

Stan P. ....6  
Kevin C. ....9  
Cathy B. ....20

### Indian River Thursday Night

Debbie F. ....28

### Indian River Men's

Clay .....7  
Jim MC. ....25

### Indian River Women's Group

Allene M. ....21

### Men to Men

### November

John m. ....21

Marshall R. ....26

### December

Vinny L. ....3  
Roy C. ....3

### November

### Noontime Recovery Group

Hugh .....2  
Jim. ....4  
Kevin. ....9  
Cassandra. ....10  
Noel. ....22  
Bill b. ....32

### Ossabaw Group

Adam P .....5  
Gene L .....13

### Royal Palm Group

James W. ....28

### Safe Harbor Group

Louise M. ....9  
Mary c. ....25  
Christal W. ....26  
Judy. ....35

### Sebastian Lunch Bunch

Carl D. ....37

### Sebastian Roseland Speaker Group

Clay V. ....7  
Al F. ....44

### Sebastian Sundowner's Group

Linda I. ....7

### South Vero Group

Jamie M. ....1

Jason P. ....1

Russ G. ....1

Sandy G. ....1

Tom K. ....1

Danielle M. ....2

Mark B. ....3

George Y. ....5

Gus J. ....11

Sheila M. ....13

Louie F. ....15

Bob H. ....26

Art B. ....27

Kevin S. ....29

Marianne C. ....40

### Vero Beach men's

John C. ....1

Tony G. ....1

Jim K. ....2

Drew. ....3

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL!

To publish announcements of AA anniversaries being celebrated by your Group's members each month, please bring list of names and numbers of years to Central Office and put in filing cabinet in folder labeled "HOW Editor," send via e-mail

[irhow@yahoo.com](mailto:irhow@yahoo.com)

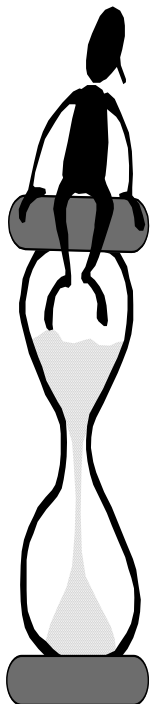
**BY THE Last Friday OF**

# ADDRESSES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

<i>Indian River Central Office</i> 1600 26th Street, Suite 6 Vero Beach, FL 32960	<i>General Service District 6 (Change)</i> <i>effective 1/1/2013-12/31/2014</i> PO Box 12248 Ft. Pierce, FL 34979-2248
<i>General Service Area 15 (Change)</i> <i>effective 1/1/2013-12/31/2014</i> PO Box 34206 Bradenton, FL 32965-0206	<i>General Service Office</i> PO Box 459, Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163

## Please Remember

Richard Brown member of ODATT passed on 11/21/12.  
He had 30years of sobriety

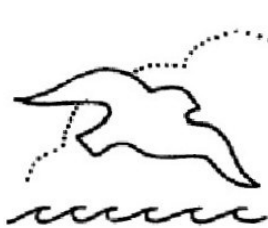


### What Are You Waiting For?

The Men's and woman's correction committee is looking for volunteers to take a meeting once a month to the Indian River county jail.

Call Bill VB (321 - 2897) or Lorelei (501 - 2945)  
(2 yrs. Of sobriety required)





Indian River Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous  
1600 26th Street, Suite 6  
P.O. Box 1776  
Vero Beach, FL 32961  
772-562-1114



URL: <a href="http://www.indianriveraa.org">www.indianriveraa.org</a>		E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:info@indianriveraa.org">info@indianriveraa.org</a>
<b><u>2012 STEERING COMMITTEE</u></b> Chair.....Karen M. Vice Chair.....D.J. I. Treasurer .....John H.  Secretary.....Sunshine P. <a href="mailto:irco_secretary@yahoo.com">irco_secretary@yahoo.com</a>		HOW Editor.....Jeremy S. Corrections—Women.....Lorelei G. Corrections—Men.....Bill VB. Critical Documents....Margaret B / Vickie S. Literature.....Sue L. Public Information.....Lane S Inventory Control.....Joseph J. Treatment.....Lorelei G./Samantha G. Telephone Coordinator.....Todd R. Unity.....Kim G
<b><u>2012 STANDING COMMITTEES</u></b> Archives.....Kathy H. Desk Coordinator.....Sue L.		Website.....Dutch V. Where and When.....Donald S. District 6 Liaison .....Eileen W.  <b><u>2012 DELEGATES AT LARGE</u></b> Lane S Cynthia G. Paul H.

It is both a privilege and a responsibility for groups and members to ensure 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 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 32960**

**Phone: 772-562-1114**