



# HOW

Monthly Publication of the Indian River Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

Volume 31, Issue 5

May 10, 2012

"The HOW is published to improve communication between local AA Groups and encourage the participation of AA members in service and activities."

## Experience, Strength and Hope...

I've been through step five two times: once to become sober and the second time to stay sober. The first time my directions came right from the steps on the wall, so I made my admission to God, one other person, and myself. I needed to meet with someone to get to the really deep resentments I had as a teenager and the abuse I went through. I didn't know how much of a life changing experience my first drink was going to be...the drinking turned out to be the start of what would be a long chain reaction that would leave me in despair and feeling empty and unloved. I was dead to the world and the world was dead to me. When I met the man I was going to share my first fifth step with, all I had with me was the pain of my past life. When he said to start talking, I went straight to age 15 and talked about the abuse in my past, then I talked about my drinking. After I was done, the person looked at me and said, "Well, my son, you've been dragged through some mud, but I don't know if it will be enough to make you want to stay sober." Then he said that God loved me and that he loved me and I would be in his prayers. I left feeling one hundred times lighter; I had a new glow about me, and I was no longer tied down by the demons of my past. A couple of days later, I talked to my mother about the experience. She told me that it was amazing to hear about the work I was doing to stay sober. Then she left me with this thought in mind...that perhaps I am beginning to see that my past was more than just a pity party of self-loathing, that my experiences have blessed me beyond my comprehension.

The second time I went through the step, I had finally grasped the understanding that I was sick, very sick. Even though I thought I was doing great and felt on top of the AA world, (I was hitting three meetings a day and had service work coming out of my ears), I still felt like I was one of a kind. I had everything I needed, yet I was still troubled by the wants of life, and I went through a stage of self-destruction, grabbing hold of everything within my reach with no consideration of how it would affect others. After a period of paying for the selfishness of my actions and thoughts, I was done. I was truly just back to step one and prayed that I wouldn't drink. I met a man who quickly walked me through one, two, and three, then step four. After I had finished my fourth step, he asked me to do some reading out of the Big Book, the first couple of pages of chapter six, Into Action. We set a date, and when the day came, I brought my fourth step, and we sat down. He asked me to start to read from the first column which started with the name of who I was resentful at; then why I was resentful; then how it affected me; and finally what part I played in it. To say the least, it was a very long three hours. I can honestly say that my second fifth step was much different. For one thing, I was able to share every resentment, not just the ones on the surface that were keeping me from any kind of peace of mind. Second, I did it with another alcoholic whose facial expression, throughout my reading, was that of acceptance and love. I knew he had experienced the same shame and hurtful things that I had experienced, and that it was ok.

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# 5 FIVE V

## Tradition 5:

Each group has but *one primary purpose*-to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

## Concept V:

Throughout our world service structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

## Principle Behind Step 5:

### Integrity

"If we have truly done a thorough job of introspection and evaluation of our assets and shortcomings, do we have the integrity to own up to it? It can be very difficult to be open and honest about our past behaviors. We begin to learn to do the right thing even though no one is watching."

**5** *Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*



I admit all I did wrong.



## Traditions Checklist

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, "I'm not a group, so this or that tradition doesn't apply to me?"
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the *limitations* of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Am I willing to twelfth step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
6. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both help them and learn from them?



Third, as I talked, he listened and started to pick out patterns in my life that kept coming out, things from work relationships to my sex relationships, the way I treated people and loved ones around me, and dishonesty. The list went on and on. Last, he asked me to go home and to sit quietly by myself and to think about what we had talked about and to pray. I remember waking up that next morning and it was like I was a new man. I had been able to let go of my past to humble myself and be right sized once again. I shared my experience with my mom, and this time, she left me with a new thought: she said, "I hope now you realize that one often meets his true purpose in life on the path he tried most to avoid." Thank you for letting me share!

## Step Five Prayer

I thank you from the bottom of my heart that I know you better. Help me become aware of anything I have omitted discussing with another person. Help me to do what is necessary to walk a free man at last. AMEN

God

## To those who have touched our lives

William P. Paul Jr., 82, Died April 10 2012, at Sebastian River Medical Center, Roseland. He was born in Philadelphia and lived in Barefoot Bay for 18 years. Coming from Blue Bell, PA., he was a pioneer in early television with CBS. He was an Air Force veteran. He was a graduate of Lehigh University. William was a long time member of AA and helped many in the Sebastian area during his sobriety.

**2011 Quarters/2012 month of OFFICE ACTIVITY****Calls for Assistance and Walk-Ins****Nature of Calls**

	JAN	FEB.	MAR	1ST Q	APR.	MAY.	1ST Q	2ND Q	3RD Q	4TH Q.
12th Step Support	14	19	12	45	11		31	35	46	48
General Info/Misc	50	63	62	175	55		272	253	253	288
Purchases	102	92	88	282	70		313	271	253	227
Meeting Info	64	51	61	176	47		137	135	144	129
Alanon / NA	12	7	21	40	12		28	27	41	23
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>195</b>		<b>728</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>715</b>

**Gate Lodge**

	<b>Tuesday 8:30 pm</b>		<b>Thursday 8:30 pm</b>		<b>Saturday 8:30 pm</b>
	<b>Speaker</b>		<b>Speaker</b>		<b>Speaker</b>
5/15	ODAAT	5/17	Roseland	5/19	IR River Men
5/22	Royal Palm	5/24	I Am Responsible	5/26	OSSABAW
5/29	Easy does it	5/31	Candlelight	6/2	ODAAT
6/05	ODAAT	6/7	Indian River Men's	6/9	IR Thursday night
6/12	Noontime	6/14	Roseland	6/17	Indian River Woman

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 Lorelei G (772) 501-2945

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

5/14	IR Men's	5/21	South Vero	5/28	Vero Beach Men's
6/4	Early Risers	6/11	IR Men's	6/18	Vero Beach Men's

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



# May 2012 BIRTHDAYS

**Barefoot bay**

Bob M. ....31  
Pat S. ....40

**Candlelight Group**

Kristin S. ....2

**Free and Easy**

Bev. ....12

**I am responsible**

Erin H. ....1  
Glenn F. ....9

**Indian River Men's Group**

Tris. ....5  
Mike D. ....7  
Bob G. ....14  
Joseph J. ....20

**Indian River Women's Group**

Tammy M. ....2  
Kristin M. ....2  
Kristin S. ....13  
Robin N. ....18  
Cynthia G. ....27

**Man to Man Group**

Greg N. ....2  
Glenn S. ....2  
George B. ....5  
Joe I. ....5  
Mike P. ....7

**Noontime Recovery**

Lee. ....2  
L.C. ....9  
Kathy. ....10  
Kenny. ....13

**O.D.A.A.T**

Barbra W. ....2  
Donna A. ....3  
Tyler D. ....3  
Greg E. ....3  
Carol C. ....4  
Josie G. ....4  
Sally H. ....7  
Patti R. ....7  
Carl C. ....8  
David P. ....8  
Lee K. ....8  
Bob A. ....13  
Dean C. ....20  
Jack D. ....22  
Peter T. ....25  
Tim Z. ....25  
Ken S. ....26  
Pat B. ....26  
Suzan H. ....30  
Dick D. ....30  
Tulio C. ....34  
Don M. ....35  
Sheila T. ....36  
Meave W. ....40

**Ossabaw Groups**

Pete Middleton. ....24

**Royal Palm Group****April**

Rich R. ....16  
Bob K. ....26  
Clell B. ....30  
Brian L. ....39

**May**

Katie H. ....18  
Steven S. ....23  
Susie K. ....32

**Sebastian 5:32**

Pat S. ....40

**Safe Harbor**

Maryann E. ....2  
Terri C. ....2  
Jan D. ....3  
Petra D. ....10  
Lin C. ....13  
Ruth W. ....30

**Sebastian Sundowner**

Kevin T. ....2  
Maureen M. ....2  
Lisa W. ....3  
Ame B. ....16

**South Vero**

Richard H. ....1  
Robert B. ....1  
Greg E. ....3  
Pat T. ....8  
Liam O. ....9  
Warren W. ....21  
Helen M. ....28  
Ron M. ....28  
Vicky B. ....29

**Surfside**

Meave W. ....40

**Vero Beach 12 & 12**

Louise W. ....2



**PLEASE** make sure to have your group's anniversaries turned in to Central Office or e-mailed to

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

**NO LATER** than the Last Friday of the month. Late submissions will **NOT** be published.

Service



Service

**"WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?"**

The Men's and Women's Correction Committee is looking for volunteers to take a meeting once a month into the Indian River County Jail.

Call Bill VB 321-2897 or Lorelei (501.2945)

**(2 yrs. of sobriety required)**

# ***The Heart Speaks***

Oprah says when you know better, you do better. I believe that to be true. I have seen that in my own life. Beginning with my alcoholism, I thought I could never give up my solution, which was alcohol. I needed the drink to soothe my life. I needed it to make my life feel better. It wasn't working any more, but I kept searching for that next feel-good drink. I was miserable and not liking my life as it was.

I made half-hearted attempts to get sober, going to meetings I didn't want to continue to go to. I was in so much emotional pain, and I couldn't think of a way out of it. I thought I couldn't give up my life preserver. I thought if I committed my life to staying sober I would remain miserable the rest of my life.

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Alcohol had been the solution for me for so long. I was a blackout drinker. I felt if I could remain drunk all would be well for me. I wouldn't have to be responsible. When alcohol stopped giving me comfort. I was truly afraid. At this point nothing was working.

I remember sitting on the floor in my living room and feeling desolate because I couldn't stand up, but I couldn't get comfort out of the bottle. I sat there begging God to help me. Even though I didn't get sober at that time, I believe that prayer was when God heard my heart. He proceeded to get me to the place of acceptance. I still wasn't ready to stop drinking, but I was aware that I needed more from life than I was getting.

After eight years of recurring relapses, I finally became so desperate. I was ready for any help I could get. I went into a rehab and I began to know better. Finally I knew I had to take responsibility for my own life. I had to put down the drink and begin to live without it. I was truly ready. I had the willingness to do whatever I had to to stay sober. I finally surrendered my alcohol. I finally knew better.

Over the years of my relapses, I made friends in AA that were changing their lives for the better. I watched people lead decent responsible lives. I knew this was what I wanted. I also knew at this point in my life alcohol held no comfort for me. I was so ready at this point to live a sober life.

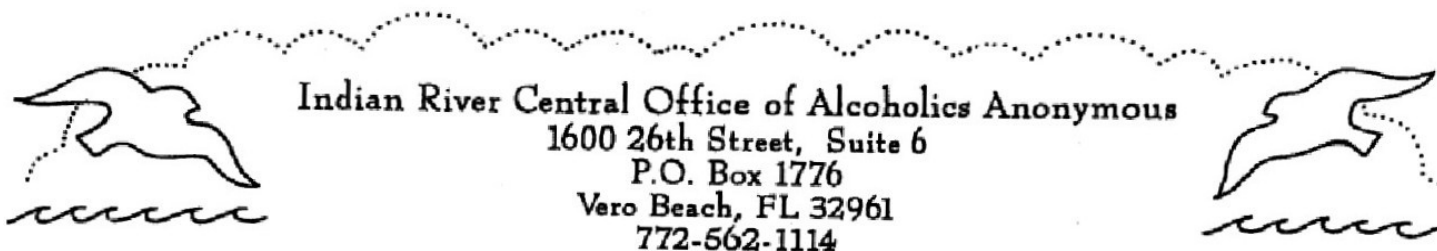
I was so amazed at how easy it was at this point. The obsession was lifted. I found a new freedom. I looked at my life and realized I wasn't able to enjoy life with alcohol. I was becoming aware of peace and serenity. It was uncomfortable to begin with. I wasn't used to feelings of joy and serenity. As I learned to stay sober one day at a time, I began to enjoy it.

When I began this journey, my expectations were only to be comfortable without needing a drink. I received so much more. If that was all I got, I would have been satisfied. When I was still drinking I had dreams of traveling the world. That was all they were at that time. Being sober and sane I have been able to travel. Things I only dreamt about began to be my reality. My life had been very small while drinking. Today I have so many friends, and so many dreams that I know I can have, because my history in recovery has told me all things are possible. I have a life today that was impossible to have if I was still drinking.

What are the perks of my sobriety? Well, I have seven grandchildren who only know a responsible sober grandmother. I have a relationships with each of them that is far beyond my wildest dreams. My sons trust me today. They allow me to spend time with their children. And they love the fact that their children love me.

If I had continued in my disease, I probably would not be allowed in their children's lives. I am able to look in the mirror and like the person I see. This was something I don't remember ever feeling. Even as a child, I felt there was something missing in me. Something only alcohol could change. When I discovered alcohol, I felt pretty, confident, and powerful. Even thought that great feeling didn't last. That I had to keep searching with each drink I had, and I never felt it again.

I found that great feeling again in the rooms of alcoholics anonymous. I was introduced to a power greater than myself who only wanted me to love myself. I am a servant to this higher power today. My job is to pass it on to another suffering alcoholic. In this job, I grow through my program. The gift I receive in helping others grow is that, today, I have purpose. I feel needed; I am a positive force who deserves to be a human among other humans. I love, and I am loved. What more do I need in life? I try to give back what I have been given, but I will never be able to repay what I have been given.



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District 6 liaison .....Eileen W

**2012 DELEGATES AT LARGE**

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**