

The Voice

Volume 26, Number 6

June 2009



One member's voice

For people who want it

A story of experience, strength, and hope

Step Six: "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

Why are "willingness" and "readiness" so important that our A.A. founders actually devoted a whole step to them? Well like anything in life, if I don't want it, "it" will not happen. AA wisdom reminds me of this principle: "AA isn't for people who need it, but for people who want it." So Step Six asks me, "Do I really want my defects removed?" Well the truth is, even though I'd listed my defects and shared them with another person, my plain answer was, "I don't know."

What? Why wouldn't I want my defects removed? How could I be ambivalent about such a thing? Well,

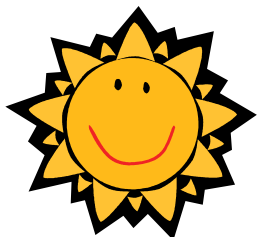
between you and me, of course I wanted my most glaring defects (anger, selfishness, insecurity) removed, yah, yah. But the subtle defects—like manipulation (with a smile), judgment and criticism ("just helping"), depression (self-pity), fixing and controlling others, and on and on—with these defects, I wasn't clear if I honestly wanted them removed.

After all, they constituted what I believed was my personality—even though upon reflection I saw that these less glaring defects were often the motives which wove patterns of conflict and isolation in my life. My sponsor reminded me that peace and a deep sense of belonging are difficult to achieve if I hold barriers of divisive

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Celebrate Summer Sober.

A quote for June

We grow by our willingness to face and rectify errors and convert them into assets.

Alcoholics Anonymous, page 124

Tradition Six: Enthusiasm Unbounded

An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

I was a little over a year sober when I began answering phones with my sponsor at our local intergroup. During one shift, he overheard a conversation in which I waxed poetic about the virtues of AA and then tried to help the caller with other problems. After the call, he calmly asked, "Have you ever read the Traditions in the *Twelve and Twelve*?"

My only exposure to the Traditions had been grumbling attendance at a few Traditions meetings.

"No," I answered.

"Well, if you are going to do more service," he said, "you might want to read about them. They're kind of . . . important."

Although I was insulted and defensive--my first reaction to many

of his suggestions--I realized that he had about twenty more years of experience than I, so I'd better take the suggestion.

I'm so glad I did. I loved reading about the trials, errors, and misadventures that the early AAs had while developing the Traditions that guide our Fellowship today. I

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Congratulations June Birthdays!

This issue we celebrate anniversaries of our local AA family members that add up to a collective 663 years. That's more than 242,000—nearly a quarter of a million—days of sobriety. One Day at a Time!

Mary H	48 years	Mitch	4 years	Dolores C	7 years
Diane R	38 years	Joan H	3 years	Charlie S	5 years
Bill J	33 years	Kristine V-M	3 years	James	4 years
Martha R	29 years	Steve M	3 years	James G	4 years
Jerry G	28 years	Craig W	2 years	Phil S	3 years
John	26 years	Kelley T	2 years	Michelle Y	3 years
Debbie T	22 years	Marty C	2 years	Tim	3 years
Sue P	21 years	Trish C	2 years	Cathy R	2 years
Elizabeth W	20 years	May Birthdays		John S	2 years
Gigi B	19 years	Jean M	32 years	Greg R	1 year
John P	19 years	Bill H	28 years	Henry M	1 year
Cindy C	19 years	Andy H	27 years	Mike	1 year
Patti H	18 years	Dan Jones	26 years	Mike B	1 year
Chloe L	14 years	Priscilla P	22 years	Sam S	1 year
Mike R	15 years	Pam E	21 years		
Big Red	7 years	Tony E	18 years		
Lisa R	7 years	Linda E	14 years		
Don C	6 years	Dawn R	12 years		
William L	5 years	Darrell W	6 years		
Charles W	4 years	Jesse B	6 years		

Please share your AA birthday with all. Deadline for July birthdays is June 20. E-mail to ocalaintergroup@msn.com or telephone: 867-0660.

Tradition Six

Continued from page one

realized that early AAs were just as fallible and, occasionally, as misguided as anyone else. But, by returning to a primary purpose, obstacles could be overcome, and the Fellowship would survive.

As I've continued to do service at the group level and beyond, I've witnessed how our Traditions help the Fellowship navigate through all sorts of situations. It's not always pretty, either, so I really started to appreciate the wisdom that came from the experience of those in the early days.

One Tradition that I've grown grateful for is the Sixth Tradition. At first, it took me a while to see how a Tradition that deals with specific issues--money, endorsement, lending out the AA name--could apply to my own recovery. But the more service I've done over the years, the more I've come to realize how this Tradition really helps our Fellowship to keep it simple.

For a number of years, I took an AA meeting into a detox every other Friday night. The detox is part of a hospital and is run, like many hospital detoxes, by a trained, professional staff.

Early on in my commitment, a patient showed up after the meeting started. She apologized profusely and began telling me why she was late. I realized that because I was leading the meeting, some detox patients might assume that I work for the hospital.

I told her that I appreciated the apology, but it wasn't necessary. From that point on, I made sure I explained, at the beginning of each meeting, that I was neither a member of the hospital staff, nor a professional in the field of alcoholism treatment. I told them that I was simply a drunk, just like them, who found a solution in Alcoholics Anonymous. The speaker and I were there to share our experience in the hopes that it might help another alcoholic--we wanted to give back what had been so freely given to us. We had

nothing to do with the hospital, we weren't there to enforce any rules, make money, or sell anything.

I found it helpful to make this clear from the beginning, both for the patients and for myself. It helped define the meeting's primary purpose, and it also, perhaps, made it easier for the patients in the detox to see me as a peer, not as a counselor or a doctor.

In my own recovery, Tradition Six reminds me not to overstep my bounds. As my sponsor witnessed that day at intergroup, there are times I get excited and try to fix things I have no business fixing.

Whether I'm answering phones, talking to a newcomer at a meeting, or working with a sponsee, my only purpose is to share my experience, strength, and hope, and to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. There are plenty of competent professionals, more qualified than I, who can handle everything else.

*John G. New York, New York
Grapevine, June 2006*

Service Opportunities!

Take the message to local correctional institutions.

Women's Meetings

There is a critical need to carry the message to women in prison (women only). You could play a vital role. For more information, Sherry R. at 352-622-4711.

Men's Meetings

Monday and Wednesday evenings. More info, please contact Paul N. at 352-622-6967; John J. at 352-598-4319.

Hotline and 12-Step calls.

Intergroup has a critical need for volunteers to help staff our 24-Hour Hotline "after business hours" from their own homes and to help respond to 12-Step calls. One year of sobriety required. Call Intergroup 17 to volunteer: 352-867-0660.

Take Meetings at the hospital.

Eddie F. is organizing meetings for hospital-bound members of our fellowship and asks for your help in carrying the message. Cell phone: 352-207-5144. Office: 352-237-8800. E-mail: eddie@ferrentinoandson.com

Through The Grapevine!

Many of our brothers and sisters in area corrections facilities enjoy reading *The AA Grapevine*. Drop off your old copies at the Intergroup Office, or coordinate a group effort through your GSR. Just think: recycling not only saves trees, it might help save a drunk.

Publicize your service opportunity.

Send details to:
ocalaintergroup@msn.com
Or call 352-867-0660



June by the Books

STEP SIX

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

In doing Step Six it helped me a lot to remember that I am striving for "spiritual progress." Some of my character defects may be with me for the rest of my life, but most have been toned down or eliminated. All that Step Six asks of me is to become willing to name my defects, claim them as my own, and be willing to discard the ones I can, just for today. As I grow in the program, many of my defects become more objectionable to me than previously and, therefore, I need to repeat Step Six so that I can become happier with myself and maintain my serenity.

Daily Reflections, page 166

TRADITION SIX

"An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose"

The unity, the effectiveness, and even the survival of A.A. will always depend upon our continued willingness to give up some of our personal ambitions and desires for the common safety and welfare. Just as sacrifice means survival for the individual alcoholic, so does sacrifice mean unity and survival for the group and for A.A.'s entire Fellowship.

As Bill Sees It, page 220

CONCEPT SIX

"On behalf of AA as a whole, our General Service Conference has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Conference also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the Conference when they act among themselves as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous"

Twelve Concepts for World Service, page 26

District 17 Corner

Talented? Interested? Simply willing?

Any or all qualifies you for a service job with District 17. Opportunities galore. Accessibilities. Archives. Cooperation with the Professionals Community. Public Information. Corrections. Grapevine. Literature. Treatment. Gratitude Dinner. Intergroup. Workshops.

Want to learn more? Attend the next District 17 meeting. All welcome.

**Thursday, June 28, 6:00pm
St. Marks United Methodist Church
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala, FL**

North Florida Conference of AA Area Assembly

July 17-19, 2009. Paramount Resort and Conference Center
2900 SW 13th Street, Gainesville, FL

District 17 officers, group service representatives, and committee chairs, make plans now to attend.
All AA members invited to attend.

Find complete meeting information and full agenda at www.aanorthflorida.org

~First Contact~

**Can YOU?
Will YOU?
Yes YOU can!**

**Just say "Yes" to answering 12th Step calls.
We'll show you the rest.**

**Learn more at the next Intergroup 17 Meeting
Sunday, June 14 @ 5:15 pm
St. Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala, FL**

For People Who Want It

Continued from page one

attitudes toward others and my role in this world. In truth, my soft clinging to these defects showed me I did not actually trust God to work in my life or others'. Wonderful. Now I had another defect to list (along with sarcasm I suppose).

So, getting honest with myself, I could see I hadn't fully believed or trusted that God would remove my defects. This became the core of my work with Step Six. How could I prepare myself as fully as possible to take the next step where I could ask God to remove them? To what degree was I really willing?

Our book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* offers some sage advice for this dilemma. First it tells me that this is the step that separates the "women/men" from the "girls/boys." In other words, it's where I cross the line into maturity. The *Twelve and Twelve* goes on by declaring that as I try repeatedly to work this step with willingness and honesty, I will have come a long way spiritually. To the extent I try, I can know that I am sincerely trying to grow in the image and likeness of my own Creator. And this would be a good thing.

I am directed also by the *Twelve and Twelve* to look at my "first willingness" to have God remove my obsession to drink. To paraphrase pages 63 and 64, when I became willing to clean house and ask a Higher Power to give me release, my obsession to drink vanished. It was lifted right out of me. Why then shouldn't we be able to achieve by the same means a perfect release from every other difficulty or defect?

The answer is, of course, that I am able to achieve release if my sincerest motive is to do so! If I can adopt the best possible attitude to this lifetime job ... and can be content with patient improvement, then I will see results.

The *Twelve and Twelve* suggests that if I would gain any real advantage in the use of this step on problems other than alcohol, I will need to make a brand new venture into open-mindedness. I will need to raise my eyes toward perfection and be ready to walk in that direction.

So here I go! I am ready to have my judgment, distrust of God, and my controlling removed. "I am done," as one of our local members says. These defects of character do not serve me, my fellows, or loved ones. I am ready to have them removed, and I will ask God to do

so again tonight. I will have patience to see them removed. In all honesty, I am likely still not ready for some of the others to be removed ... but I will ask for more guidance and for the willingness on those as well.

I am so grateful to be a part of a fellowship where we can practice these wonderful principles and share the spiritual journey as we "trudge the Road of Happy Destiny" together!

Marianne M.
June 2009, Ocala, Florida

The thoughts, expressions, and opinions expressed here are those of the author and not necessarily those of Alcoholics Anonymous or Intergroup 17, Ocala-Marion County, Florida.

*Excerpts from *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* are used by permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.



How Groups and Individuals Support the Work of AA

Group contributions are the major funding source for the work of Intergroup 17 and other areas of AA. Many groups follow the 50-30-10-10 plan of support after they meet their own financial needs:

- 50 percent to Intergroup 17
- 30 percent to AA Worldwide General Services Office
- 10 percent to North Florida Area Assembly
- 10 percent to District 17

Send group contributions to:

Intergroup 17
P.O. Box 1192
Ocala, FL 34478

District 17
P.O. Box 3081
Ocala, FL 34478

NFACAA
P.O. Box 567
Melbourne, FL 32902

The General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
6035 E. Tudor St.
New York, NY 10164

Some individual members choose to provide financial support to Intergroup 17 in various ways.

- *Faithful Fivers*: \$5 each month
- *Double Nickel*: \$10 each month
- *Birthday Club Members*: \$1 or more per year of sobriety, on their AA "birthday"

All contributions large and small make a difference. Send to:

Intergroup 17
P.O. Box 1192
Ocala, FL 34478

THANKS!



I am responsible. Whenever anyone anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA to be there. For that I am responsible.

Ocala-Marion Country Group Contributions to Intergroup 17—since June 2008

Group	Fiscal YTD	Group	Fiscal YTD	Group	Fiscal YTD
2nd Step Group	\$ 50.00	Grace Group	\$.22	Primary Purpose	\$ 84.00
11th Step Group		Grateful Gals	\$ 84.00	Shores of Sobriety	\$ 180.00
17th Street Group		Happy Highlanders - Dunnellon		Sisters of Serenity - Ocklawaha	
164 Pages Group	\$ 21.00	Happy Hour Group	\$ 100.00	Start A New Life	\$ 33.60
ACOA		Happy, Joyous & Free	\$ 717.78	Steps and Promises	
ALANDN	\$ 60.00	Headstart Group	\$ 632.99	Stop Whining and Sober Up	\$ 50.00
Acceptance	\$ 100.21	It's In The Book		Strength In Numbers - Belleview	
Alive and Well	\$ 45.00	Keep It Simple	\$ 200.21	Summerfield Group	
Anonymity Group		Last Call Group	\$ 50.00	Sundae Social Group	\$ 276.36
As Bill Sees It - The Villages	\$ 481.05	Last House On The Block		TLC Group - the Centers	\$.34
Belleview Eye Opener Group	\$ 80.00	Life Is Good Sober - The Refuge		TenBroek Group	
Belleview Group	\$ 190.00	Living Sober	\$ 631.34	Unity Group	
Bonfire Group - The Refuge		Lunch Bunch	\$ 357.42	We Give Thanks	\$ 140.00
Breakfast Club	\$ 2919.18	Mano Abierta	\$ 25.00	We Give Up	\$ 124.89
Came To Believe	\$ 10.40	Marion Oaks Group		Weir Crazy - Summerfield	\$ 375.00
Citra Group	\$ 25.00	McIntosh Group		Young People's Group - YPG	\$ 10.00
Come As You Are		New Attitudes	\$ 256.20		
Conscious Contact	\$ 629.94	New Life Group	\$ 20.83	BIRTHDAY CLUB	\$ 125.00
Experience, Strength & Hope		No Name Group	\$ 103.35	DOUBLE NICKELS	\$ 50.00
Forest Group	\$ 225.00	Nueva Vida		FAITHFUL FIVERS	\$ 10.00
Ft. McCoy Group	\$ 100.48	Ocala AM Men's Group	\$ 505.00	INDIVIDUALS	\$ 97.35
Fountain of Gratitude - Salt Springs	\$ 210.28	Ocala Group	\$ 2903.50		
Free To Be	\$ 30.00	Ocklawaha AM Group		DISTRICT 17	\$ 776.00
God's Way Group	\$ 10.78	One Page At A Time			

Local Events and Meetings of Interest

Ocala/Marion County

For a complete listing of the more than 140 meetings of AA per week in Ocala/Marion county visit:
www.aaocalamarion.org

Monday

Beginners Meeting

17th Street Group

6:00pm every Monday
Church of Christ
2730 SE Maricamp Rd., Ocala

Wednesday

Meditation

Conscious Contact

7:00pm every Wednesday
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
3452 NE Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Nueva Vida

7:00pm every Wednesday
150-A SW 23rd Ave. (1/2 block
South of Ft. King), Ocala

Thursday

Eat 'n Speak

Keep It Simple Group

Last Thursday of the month
Eat: 7:00pm Speaker: 8:00pm
Small fee for meal
ALL INVITED!
Ascension Lutheran Church
5730 SE 28th Street, Ocala

District 17 Monthly Meeting

6:00 pm last Thursday of the month
All GSRs. Everyone welcome.
St. Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Friday

Speaker Meeting

Experience, Strength and Hope

8:00pm every Friday
Druid Hills Methodist Church
1712 SE Lake Weir Blvd., Ocala

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Mano Abierta

7:00pm every Friday
2082 Walnut Street
Dunnellon, FL

Saturday

Eat 'n Speak

Ocala Group

Last Saturday of the month
Eat: 7:00pm Speaker: 8:00pm
Small fee for meal
EVERYONE INVITED!
St. Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Mano Abierta

7:00pm every Saturday
2082 Walnut Street
Dunnellon, FL

Sunday

Intergroup 17 Monthly

5:15 pm second Sunday of month
Intergroup reps. Everyone welcome.
St. Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

New Groups & Meetings

Monarch Overcomers Group

Tuesday through Friday
6:00 pm
15509 SW 34th Ct. Rd.
Marion Oaks
More info: 352-207-6011

Day by Day Group

Wednesdays, 7:30 pm
200 SW 40th. Lot 12
Ocala, FL
More info: 352-629-2894

New Beginnings Group

Fridays 7:30 pm
Sunset Harbor Baptist Church
9200 SE Sunset Harbor Road
Summerfield, FL
More info: 352-283-0778

"No Name Yet" Group

Open meeting, 7:30pm
Every Friday
9200 Sunset Harbor Road
Summerfield, FL
Info: Mike G. 352-245-3272

Lifesaver Group

Open meeting, 12:00 noon
Monday through Saturday
Recovery Road at CornerStone Ctr.
6793 SW Highway 200
Ocala

Meeting Change

Happy Hour Group

Saturday meeting discontinued

Happy Hour Group has announced that it will no longer hold a regular 5 pm, Saturday meeting at Timberidge Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Special Events

See details elsewhere
in this issue.

Saturday, June 20 Noon to 2 pm

"Meet Your Delegate." District 17.
Druid Hills United Methodist
Church. No charge.

Saturday, June 20 7:00 pm

Special Eat 'n Speak. Featuring
special guest, Sandy Beach. St.
Marks United Methodist. No charge.

Friday-Sunday, July 17-19

North Florida Conference of
Alcoholics Anonymous Area
Assembly. Gainesville.

July 29-August 2

53rd Florida State Convention.
Jacksonville, Florida.
www.53.flstateconvention.com

**53rd Florida State Convention
July 29th – August 2, 2009
Jacksonville, Florida**

Speakers from around the U.S.A.
Marathon Meetings
Family Workshops
Young People Meeting
Buffet Friday
Golf Tournament
Horseshoes Tournament
Comedian Jeff Allen



5k Run/Walk
Ice Cream Socials
Dances and Entertainment
Non-English Speaking Meetings
Grapevine
Dr. Bob's Archives
Old Timers Meeting
Meditation Meetings
AI-Anon & Alateen

More information and register online
www.53.flstateconvention.com

Book your hotel room now! www.jacksonville.hyatt.com
Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront Tel: +1 904 588 1234

**Special Eat 'n Speak
Popular speaker
Sandy Beach
Saturday, June 20, 2009**



**Sponsored by
Young Peoples Group
and Unity Place**

Meal: 6 pm
Program: 7 to 9 pm

Event is free.!
Side dishes/desserts welcome.

St. Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala, FL

**Planning to purchase AA literature?
Plan ahead and save!**

**AA World Services
announces a price increase
on most AA literature.**

AA World Services, publisher of our most frequently used books and literature, has announced that the following price increases will become effective July 1, 2009.

- *Alcoholics Anonymous* (The Big Book) will increase \$2.00 per copy
- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (The Twelve and Twelve) will increase \$1.00 per copy
- Other literature cost increases will range between \$.50 and \$2.00 per copy

If you or your group would like to purchase any AA World Services literature before the price increase go into effect, please come to the Intergroup 17 Office and purchase directly or place your orders for later pick up.

**For more information
Call Intergroup: 352-867-0660
Visit our office: 3666-A NE 25th Street
Ocala, Florida 34470**

**Meet Your
Delegate**



**District 17 invites you to meet
Chet P, Area Delegate
AA General Services Conference.**

Hear his AA World Services report.
Learn more about service work.
Ask questions. Get involved.

**Saturday June 20, 2009
Noon to 2 pm
Lunch provided.**

Druid Hills United Methodist Church
1712 SE Lake Weir Avenue, Ocala, FL



**Intergroup 17 Meetings
You're invited!**

Anyone interested is urged to attend and learn more about all the great opportunities for service work within our local AA community.

Next Meeting

Sunday, June 14, 5:15 pm
St Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Intergroup Reps., please send your contact info to:
ocalaintergroup@msn.com or call
352-867-0660.

**Intergroup 17
Ocala-Marion County
Florida**

3666-A N.E. 25th Street, Ocala, Florida 34470
Phone: 352-867-0660 Fax: 352-867-7819
Email: ocalaintergroup@msn.com

Hours of operation

Monday-Friday 10 am to 5 pm
Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

Website

www.aocalamarion.org

24-Hour Hotline

352-867-0660

Free Subscription. The Voice by e-mail.

For your free monthly subscription,
send an e-mail with "Free Voice" in the subject line to:

ocalaintergroup@msn.com.

The Voice sent by e-mail is in PDF format and can be read using Adobe Reader. Free download available at www.adobe.com. Printed copies available at Intergroup office.

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Stamp