



The Voice

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Important Dates

July 12th —Noon

(always 2nd Sunday)

Intergroup/Central Office
Representative meet
Lost & Found
616 S. Pine Ave

July 30th-6:45pm

District 17
monthly meeting
Lost & Found Club
616 S. Pine Ave

Every Thursday Area 14

Service Workshop, 6pm
Hospitality, 5:45pm
New Topic every Thursday
Zoom Meeting ID:
828 5682 4762; pw: service

FAITHFUL FIVERS

Contribute \$5/month
or \$60/year

Contributors:

Joe S, Phil H,
Ralph W, Ginger H
Linda H, Stephanie D,
Casey P

Your membership directly
supports 12-Step work at
District 17 Central Office

GRAPEVINE Daily Quote June 3, 2026

"Living sober is not all roses all the time. But the cool thing is, when I am nervous, it is OK. I do not have to drink to fix it. It is the same with being sad, worried or afraid."

Elkton, Md., August 2012, "Then Came Susan and Dottie", AA Grapevine

Step 7—"Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

JULY 2026 | ANNUAL PRISON ISSUE | STEP SEVEN

All of Me

BY: MICHELLE B. | KELOWNA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

A perfect mom, perfect homemaker, perfect at work -
so why so unhappy? Step Seven had an answer

I got sober in April of 2015. I had gone to rehab four years earlier, but I wasn't ready to quit. Back then I was still drinking wine in a glass at home with my husband—not vodka in a travel mug, alone, hiding in my car.

By the time I was finally ready, alcohol had me on my knees in front of the toilet at 4:45 in the morning—again. Between dry heaves I would check my phone. Ten missed calls from my daughter. Messages of her crying and screaming into the phone that I had forgotten to pick her up from school—again.

In the winter up here in Canada, it's still dark at 4:45 in the morning, and it's already dark at 4:45 in the afternoon. Blackout after blackout, the only way I knew if it was morning or afternoon was if my husband was asleep next to me in our bed. The alcohol clearly wasn't working anymore, yet I kept going back to it. Why?

All I ever wanted was to be perfect. Perfect at work, perfect homemaker and a perfect mom. But there was no perfection once I started drinking. Fortunately, I crawled back into the rooms and surrendered.

By the grace of God and great sponsorship, I've now had a spiritual awakening. I worked my first three Steps to the best of my ability. My Fourth Step was a gunny sack full of resentments. During my Fifth, my eyes began to open, and everything suddenly looked different. I had been in a pit of self-absorbed pity and saw I had become a martyr. My resentments and defects

were my motivation and my fuel. I always had something to prove; I always had to be the best. And it worked ... for a while.

I rose to the top of my profession, had a beautiful home, loving husband and wonderful daughter. And then what started as "a bit of a drinking problem" to alleviate stress and anxiety very quickly spiraled and sent me to my bottom.

With willingness and a modicum of humility my story didn't end on that chapter though. I got sober. And most importantly of all, AA helped me find God, something I thought I neither wanted nor needed.

When I got to Step Seven in the Big Book I saw the prayer: "My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad." I had never read or heard anything like that in my life. Who would want all of me? I thought I had to be perfect for anyone to want me. I thought if I wasn't the best, I wasn't enough. I didn't think there was any good left. But after reading that prayer, I saw my part in all my resentments. I could see how I wasn't victimized by my alcoholism only, nor by all those people on my resentment list. I was victimized by my perception, which was made up of my character defects. Much of it was self-inflicted pain. The world and the people in it weren't going to change. The change would have to come from within me.

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Steps Six and Seven have been the game changers into a new way of living for me. I had been living in and feeding my defects for so long, I didn't realize I was punishing myself. Fortunately, God's help came in the form of sponsoring other women. Here I learned patience, tolerance, empathy and true love. When practicing these assets, there isn't much room for defects. I also saw that being flawed, no matter how far down the scale they had gone, these women were human and their stories made them complicated and multidimensional.

I learned from my own mistakes that some of my biggest "failures" could benefit others. And mostly I realized that this ideal of "perfection" was really a billion little defects wrapped up in sheep's clothing. Only now in recovery do I see that perfection is my biggest defect of them all. There's no humility in perfection, only pride and ego—or self-pity. Our Big Book talks about our reaction to alcohol, how we've been placed in a position of neutrality, that we react sanely, but still we recoil as from a hot flame. That's what

began to happen to me with some of my character defects. They no longer worked for me. And with God's help I can seek through prayer and meditation and ask for the right thought or action. Not so you'd like me better, but because most of my most glaring defects of self-pity, inferiority and jealousy stand in the way of my usefulness to God and my fellows.

Each day I'm becoming more authentic, not perfect, but closer to the person God had intended all along. AA has given me a design for living that really works under all conditions. The program has impacted my family for the good in ways none of us could have dreamed possible. Today I'm indeed willing that God should have all of me, good and bad, because I now know that's how my Creator made me.

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***Breakfast Club meeting location change for the week of:
July 13 thru July 17 to Steve M's Warehouse located
behind the LaHacienda restaurant -***

***Warehouse address: 4215 W Hwy 40, Ocala, FL -
PLEASE PARK BY THE LAUNDROMAT
OR IN THE FRONT PARKING LOT
AND WALK THRU THE LAUNDROMAT
TO GET TO THE WAREHOUSE IN BACK***

***Gratitude Dinner Committee—
Saturday, September 19th
@ 9:00 AM—Lost & Found Club***



Tradition 7—"Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

JULY 2026 | ANNUAL PRISON ISSUE | TRADITION SEVEN

What's It Worth

BY: HEATHER K. | HOLBROOK, NEW YORK

How do we decide the amount of money we put in the basket each meeting?
One member shares what she does

When I came to AA I was utterly without resource. I had demoralized myself to the point where I hid, ashamed from God in all forms. I was also penniless. Nonetheless, I have always believed in the spiritual truth that what you put into something is proportional to what you can get out of it. So, since I was utterly desperate for meaningful sobriety, I put \$1 in the basket when it came around. Let's say at that time I gave \$28 per month.

Then AA made me employable. I went to work full-time and started putting \$2 in the basket, like a big shot. Now I contributed about \$56 per month. I was now a little less desperate.

Then as sober time accumulated, I went to school, earned a professional license, and my salary increased dramatically. But I continued on auto pilot to put the same \$2 in the basket—about \$56 per month. I was not very desperate. This went on for years.

In November of 2023, I read the letter written to the Fellowship by the general manager of GSO. I learned therein that AA was struggling financially to provide necessary services. It asked if we would reconsider our contributions in light of what AA represents in our lives.

I remember being told that Terry B., a longtime friend of the Fellowship, once said that the good news is that AA has plenty of money to bring all the vital services to all the alcoholics who need them stretching into the far future. The bad news is that it's in your pockets. It's in *my* pocket.

When I got sober in 2015, a two-liter bottle of soda cost 99 cents at our discount store. That's what I was contributing then—a two-liter bottle of soda, when I had almost nothing. In 2023, the same two-liter bottle cost just under \$3, and I was still putting \$2 in the basket. So in the time that AA had increased my salary 10-fold, I showed my gratitude by reducing my contribution to 2/3 of a bottle of soda. This was indefensible.

Where had my faith gone? How was my surrender of my will and life to God as I understood him reflected in what I was putting in the basket? I decided it wasn't.

Another angle: I, like most of us, carry insurance. That means I pay someone somewhere an amount of money which theoretically protects me from the ravages of various misfortunes. For health insurance, auto insurance, homeowners, flood, professional malpractice insurance, life, dental and vision, I pay (or is paid on my behalf) \$2,500 per *month*. In light of what I pay for all that insurance, I have no business feeling that \$56 is adequate for the program that insures it all.

AA has given me a house. AA gave me a profession where clients pay me money for my advice. It gave me a relationship with children who are often fond of me. It gave me working, registered automobiles—*plural*. It gave me a life—a wonderful life. There is nothing I have that I cannot credit AA for.

Ever since this personal awakening, what I now do is: I give my home group a lump sum of cash per month that more closely represents its impact in my life and the lives of my children. I have set a recurring contribution to deduct automatically every month at aa.org. I also throw a few dollars in the basket at meetings that are not my home group. By the way, these contributions may be tax deductible. I give much less than the \$7,500 annual individual limit, but I do now feel my Step Three is reflected in the basket as it passes by.

To thine own self be true. How we each decide to meet our responsibility for self-support is a purely personal matter. Our Tradition Seven is not intended as a club for me to beat everyone

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The Voice

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GRAPEVINE Daily Quote
JULY 5, 2026

up with. It's for me to decide for myself what's appropriate, and I leave you to do the same. Money is not required for AA membership.

Personally, I have never once been able to give AA more than I have gotten in return. Whatever income I ever have over the amount I had when I stumbled into my first meeting is entirely because of AA. Self-support is my sacred responsibility, and truly, what a privilege it is to be able to feel I have contributed in a small way to the program that gave me this wonderful life.

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Elkton, Md., August 2012, "Then Came Susan and Dottie", AA Grapevine

Celebration of Life

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
RAFAEL Q.

Please join us for food and fellowship
as we celebrate the life of our dear friend.

A devoted engineer, proud Puerto Rican American,
and a man whose kindness, perseverance,
and many years of faithful recovery,
inspired countless lives.

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
510 SE Broadway Street
Friday July 24th 2026
6:00 PM

Forever
in our hearts

*The memories we share will never fade.
The love you gave will always stay.*

Celebration of Life

In Loving Memory of the unexpected passing of

Colby Hoyt

Saturday, August 15, 2026 @ 11:00 am
Bellevue United Methodist Church, 5640 SE Brown Rd, Bellevue, FL 34420



The Voice

Birthdays JULY

Bellevue Eye Opener

Pat R—52

Bellevue Group

Rita Z—18

Jimmy Z—49

Breakfast Club

Brad S—4

Glenn S—4

Dee C—10

Ron H—11

Dianne B—16

George W—48

Headstart

Ted T—2

Rebecca D—4

Clyde J—12

Dena B—10

Betsy L—13

Ray Karen—13

Living Sober

Kelda S—2

Dennis M—2

Richard L—

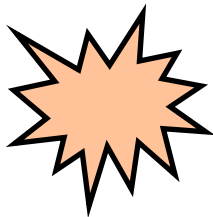
We Give Up

Nancy J—35

Contributions JUNE

Alive and Well	\$ 25.65
Anonymity	\$ 83.00
Individuals	\$ 140.78
Cabin in the Woods	\$ 50.00
Headstart	\$ 294.56
Joe & Charlie Group	\$ 195.00
Last Call	\$ 100.00
Mano Abierta	\$ 15.00
Shores of Sobriety	\$ 40.00
Stop Whining and Sober Up	\$ 150.00
Sunday After Lunch	\$ 150.00

Congratulations!



Thank you for supporting your
local Intergroup Office

Great Speaker—**Doug R.**

Listen to him at:

**Sober Cast and/or
YouTube: Sober Sunrise**

From the GSO Pamphlet

*Self-support;
Where Money and Spiritually Mix (F-3)*

10% to District 17
P.O. Box 3081, Ocala, FL 34478

10% to Area 14 *****

NFAC Treasurer
P.O. Box 840066
St. Augustine, FL 32080
******(Address changes every two years. Visit
www.aanorthflorida.org for correct address)*

30% to General Service Office
*PO Box 459, Grand Central Station,
New York, NY 10163*

50% to Central Office/Intergroup 17
*616 S Pine Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471*