

616 S. Pine Ave
Ocala, FL 34471
352 867-0660
aaocalaintergroup@gmail.com

August 2026 issue of *The Voice*

Step 8—"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

AUGUST 2026 | SOBER TRAVELS | STEP EIGHT

Clean Slate

BY: J.L. | WILSONVILLE, OREGON

Pretending to be a newcomer, at 31 years sober she dove into the Steps again. Boy, did Step 8 surprise her

When I was new to AA, I worked the Steps, albeit with limited input from my sponsor. This was on me as much as on her. I was both scared and proud, meaning I didn't know how to ask for help, and I also didn't know how to receive it. For my sponsor's part, she was a gentle, non-directive older woman who did not push me, which was exactly why I chose her.

The end result was that I did the best job I could. I stayed sober, but the Steps were not front and center in my new sober life.

At 12 years sober I joined a Step workshop with a group of women, and we got "down and dirty," as they say. I dug deep. I wrote and wrote and wrote. I shared and shared, and I unloaded some pretty heavy baggage. I let go of some old resentments and made a few overdue amends. I felt a lot lighter.

But my best journey through the Steps came, believe it or not, when I was just shy of 31 years sober. It was truly a Higher Power thing. The pandemic was in full bloom; I was attending an email-format meeting, and I felt this nudge (more like an elbow to the ribs) to ask a woman in this meeting to lead me through the Steps. "Pretend I'm a newcomer," I requested, and she did.

We did the Steps by the book. We "read" via email through the Big Book, answered any questions the book posed and shared our reflections. I really thought I had rid myself of all my secrets and old resentments, but I hadn't.

To be honest and kind to myself, I had always done the best I could with the strength and abilities and willingness I had at the time. This time—well, as I said, it was truly a Higher Power thing—I was

ready to let go. I dug even deeper. I wrote and shared, wrote and shared. My absolute biggest ah-ha moment came with Step Eight. There's a short line near the end of "How It Works" in the Big Book that I had never noticed before: "We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct and are willing to straighten out the past if we can." Up until then my Step Eight list had only contained names of those I had resentments against. Oops, that's not what the Step says.

This time I went back and wrote a whole new list of people I had hurt by my conduct. That list was embarrassingly, humiliatingly long. By only looking at those whom I resented, I had conveniently bypassed those I had harmed. In that way I avoided looking at my own behavior and avoided taking responsibility for my past actions. Oh my. This changed everything.

For the first time in 31 years, I felt like I finally had a clean slate. Doing Step Eight as it is written changed Steps Four through Nine. Ultimately it has changed Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve as well. It's made me much more aware of my daily conduct and has helped boost me out of my old victim mode and into (I sincerely hope) a mature adulthood.

Life is not about what "they" did to me, it's about how I respond to life. It's not about the resentments I hold against them, it's about how I hurt others by my conduct.

Why did it take 31 years for me to get this? Who knows, and it doesn't really matter. It takes what it takes. What matters is that I listened to my Higher Power's nudge, took action and cleaned house.

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Important Dates

August 9th —Noon

(always 2nd Sunday)

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

August 27th-6:30 PM

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 August 5, 2026

"We have, in AA, no coercive human authority. Because each AA, of necessity, has a sensitive and responsive conscience, and because alcohol will discipline him severely if he backslides, we are finding we have little need for manmade rules or regulations."

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., January 1948,
From: "Tradition Two", The Language of the Heart



The Voice

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Tradition 8—"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers."

AUGUST 2026 | SOBER TRAVELS | TRADITION EIGHT

We do it for Free

BY: ANDES H. | BEND, OREGON

A member in Oregon shares about the beauty and importance of Tradition Eight

No one gets paid to save souls in AA. You can vacuum the floor, clean the toilets or answer phones for a paycheck if your name tag says custodian, building engineer, facilities technician or secretary. But no one earns a dime to hear your bottoming-out-in-a-store-parking-lot story, your shame after walking home from jail because your phone wasn't charged or the moment you realized your teeth had so much plaque you were basically making your own dirty denture mold.

We help each other because we need to—not because it's a gig, a job or resume-padding occupation. And I thank God for that.

Because when service and survival get tangled up with money, trust doesn't just get shaky—it collapses. The moral compass doesn't just wobble—it melts into the slippery smile of a charlatan, like the Wizard of Oz behind the curtain. And as alcoholics, we all specialized in being conjurers. We need rigorous angels of truth around us.

I stretched their hamstrings and rubbed their backs, while also pushing my own boundaries to the point of emotional injury. If I said no to a schedule change, to a discounted training package, to one more hour donated as a fundraising auction item—I feared they'd yank my daughter's scholarship. So I kept going — smiling,

giving, serving—never feeling safe. Never feeling seen. Never feeling equal. I was a slave in spandex.

I could never afford the \$2,500 check for the annual gala they expected from every family. So I offered other "specials" instead: I took my clients' kids on field trips to the TV studio where I moonlighted as a fitness guru. I donated gift baskets filled with training sessions—each certificate costing me time I could have spent with actual cash-paying clients. I even let their kids run wild in my pristine studio, turning exercise balls into dodge ball missiles. I gave and gave, trying to prove I belonged in their world, while quietly disappearing from my own.

That's why Tradition Eight hits me hard—and hits me right. In AA, when someone sits next to me and says, "I've been there too," I don't question their motive. They don't want my money, my status or my kid's future. They're not watching me sweat, wondering if I'm good for another favor. They're just staying sober by helping me stay sober. That's it. No hidden costs. No fine print. Just service—not the kind that hustles, the kind that heals.

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



Celebration of Life



Colby Hoyt

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



Birthdays AUGUST

Bellevue Eye Opener

Bob S—12

Bellevue Group

Trisha C—9

Jimmy F—15

Pauly T—26

Sandy H—39

Breakfast Club

Fizel—1

Headstart

LaTiara—1

Karen B—3

James B—46

Living Sober

Nick—1

Noah C—1

Justin F—3

Melissa B—3

Jayne L—8

Maritza—14

John W—39

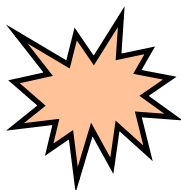
We Give Up

Carissa—8

Linda Mc—12

Mary T—23

Congratulations!



From the GSO Pamphlet
*Self-support;
Where Money and Spiritually Mix (F-3)*

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

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10% to Area 14 \*\*\*\*\*

NFAC Treasurer

P.O. Box 840066

St. Augustine, FL 32080

\*\*\*\*\**(Address changes every two years. Visit  
[www.aanorthflorida.org](http://www.aanorthflorida.org) for correct address)*

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

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

# Contributions JULY

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 4th Dimension          | \$ 30.00  |
| Anonymity              | \$ 74.00  |
| Bellevue Group         | \$ 40.00  |
| Bellevue Eye Opener    | \$ 225.00 |
| Breakfast Club         | \$ 802.95 |
| Easy Does It           | \$ 150.00 |
| Emotional Balance      | \$ 112.70 |
| Individuals            | \$ 12.41  |
| Happy, Joyous & Free   | \$ 467.86 |
| Headstart              | \$ 254.86 |
| Living Grace Group     | \$ 150.00 |
| Living Sober           | \$ 420.45 |
| Ocala Group            | \$ 576.59 |
| On Awakening           | \$ 386.26 |
| One Day At A Time      | \$ 150.00 |
| Primary Purpose        | \$ 112.88 |
| Rule 62                | \$ 375.00 |
| Saturday Night Speaker | \$ 97.46  |
| Sisters in Sobriety    | \$ 26.15  |
| Sober Yankees          | \$ 52.00  |
| Step Right Up          | \$ 25.00  |
| We Give Up             | \$ 568.25 |

Thank you for supporting your  
local Intergroup Office