



The Voice

STEP 10 – “Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”

OCTOBER 2026 | LONELINESS | STEP TEN

Step Ten to the Rescue

BY: L.C. | FLORIDA

I walked with trepidation into our second business meeting of the year at one of my home groups, a speaker/discussion topic meeting. I didn't want to be there. The man who said, "There are no rules in AA" was back again. I could tell he felt grumpy and argumentative by our verbal sparring as we waited for everyone to join. The informal nature of our business meetings did not have an agenda; therefore, our meetings functioned more like a group conscience.

During the meeting he spoke up. "I have an issue I want to bring up," he said. "The last two weeks we had a pitch format, where one person picks another to speak and so on. You can't share unless you get picked. I had some newcomers come up to me after the meeting and ask if we always did it that way. I said no. We need to make sure it doesn't happen again, or the meeting may fold." He went on to talk about a couple of meetings that disbanded, which he thought was because others were not free to share. He even said he wrote to GSO years ago and they said not to do that style of meeting.

His fear-based request to stop the pitch format met with agreement from other group members. Apparently, they didn't like it either or maybe they were afraid of him. I voted against the measure, but not with emotion sobriety. I threw his words back in his face in the time allotted to members who disagreed with the vote. It didn't matter. We now had a rule.

Leaving the meeting I noticed my solar plexus felt like I had done 50 sit-ups. I realized it was because I had really wanted to control the outcome. I had attempted to exercise my power and got nowhere.

I also remembered that the best way to deal with someone in the rooms or elsewhere is to practice love and tolerance through praying for them. Yuck. That's the last thing I wanted to do. Pray for him? Of course. Absolutely. I needed to do that. So, I did.

In the end, I didn't truly care which way the sharing went, as long as we kept to our primary purpose and practiced love and tolerance with each other. I can't control others. I can only control myself. I have work to do.

God spoke during the meeting through the collective Higher Power of each member present. It always amazes me how something that seems lousy and no good ends up being the best thing for my spiritual growth.

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



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Important Dates

October 11th — Noon

(always 2nd Sunday)

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

October 29th-6:30pm

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
October 7, 2026

"Sobriety does interesting things to the mind—clears it up some, lets a bit of honesty and truth filter in, and begins to demand reality.

"It Takes What It Takes,"
Pompano Beach, Florida,
June 1978, Step by Step



TRADITION 10 "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

OCTOBER 2026 -- Loneliness -- | Tradition 10

Watch What We Say

BY: ANONYMOUS – OSLO

*He thought it was OK to share his politics because he assumed everyone agreed.
Luckily, Chimney Dave didn't*

I got sober in a small AA meeting in the little town I grew up in. I thought everyone there had the same beliefs I had.

One day, with a few months sober, I was smoking outside our meeting. Like a typical self-righteous, freshly sober, know-it-all 22-years old, I started spewing out political beliefs. I knew AA had no opinions on outside issues, but I was speaking for myself. I was outside the meeting after all, and most importantly, I knew that everyone else agreed with me.

Right then Chimney Dave spoke up. Chimney Dave never said anything. All I knew about him was that he was 10 years older than me and had 10 more years of sobriety than I did. I admired his quiet resolve and stability, as did everyone else.

"We don't talk about politics in AA," he said. "And we don't all agree with you."

I shut up. But my head was running a mile-a-minute, telling me all the reasons he was a stupid, wrong-faced, not-nice jerk, among other epithets. Eventually I calmed down. I realized that in two brief sentences, he gave me my first real lessons in humility and consideration for others.

When I was a newcomer, my alcoholic mind was always looking for differences – for reasons why I don't belong in a meeting, for reasons I'm different. For me, this was dangerous thinking. I learned that in order to keep AA welcoming, especially to newcomers, it's best for me to keep my opinions to myself. I can't assume that anyone in or around the meeting agrees with my (almost always self-righteous) opinions, especially my opinions about divisive issues. Even when I'm talking about AA, my best bet is to share my experience, not my opinion.

For me, going to meetings where I don't know anyone is a good way to remember how sharing opinions can exclude alcoholics from AA. When I'm familiar and comfortable in an AA meeting, it's easy to assume everyone thinks like I do, and easy to ignore it when they don't.

I moved to a new town a few years ago, just as the country was in the middle of a divisive election that was spilling politics into nearly every aspect of American culture. The first meeting I attended had been invaded by the divisions of the time. I was 10 years sober, but I felt like a newcomer then. I didn't know anyone. I wanted an AA community. Instead, I found a culture war.

Fortunately I found another meeting that focused more on AA and less on members' irrelevant opinions. And by the time the pandemic came around, I started attending outdoor meetings all winter with those same divisive people who had (mostly) learned to keep their opinions away from meetings.

I moved to Norway in 2021 and have since been reminded of my need to stay vigilant in keeping my opinions and assumptions out of AA. One time I messed up. I mentioned a news headline from the United States during the pre-meeting chat. A few members of my group started talking about U.S. culture, a topic that would have seemed benign to me in this small group. But I know how it feels to sit silently in a meeting, fuming with disagreement—angry and isolated.

As two of the members immersed themselves in unsurprising criticisms of American society, I noticed a visitor in the back not saying anything. He stayed through the meeting, then quickly made his way out. I hope our discussion before the meeting didn't make him feel he was in the wrong place. I hope he was able to hear the AA message. I hope he stayed sober.

I always want to remember that one of the best things I can do for newcomers and all AAs is to keep my controversial opinions, and potentially controversial opinions, and the "facts" I know that might be controversial, as far away from AA as possible.



The Voice

SAVE THE DATE

MORE DETAILS to follow

Arts & Crafts plus Plant Sale
Sunday, November 15th
11:00am - 3:00pm

REMINDERS

Bellevue Group
BBQ
October 15th—Lake Lillian

Gratitude Dinner Committee
Saturday, October 17, 2026
@ 9:00 am—Lost & Found

YPG & NEW ATTITUDES

HALLOWEEN PARTY

OCTOBER 24TH

Meeting: 7 PM at Compassions
Party at Lost & Found
Right after the meeting • Until 10:30 PM

Lost & Found Clubhouse
616 S. Pine Ave • Ocala, FL

\$5 *suggested* donation
Bring your favorite spooky side, snack, or dessert

Family & friends welcome

Games • Music • 50/50 Raffle & More

COSTUME CONTEST
Come dressed in your best costume
for a chance to win!



Birthdays October

Bellevue Eye Opener

Sabrina—5
Mike M—42

Bellevue Group

Steve H—4
Gwendolen C—6
Sam B—13
Dave P—37
Lou B—45

Headstart

Bob C—2
Krystal M—4
Eric H—6
Kenny B—13
Connie C—24

Living Sober

Nate H—6
Thomas D—17
Don P—20

Dottie C—40

We Give Up

Rick F—14
Brenda H—17
Randy A—17
Alison C—22
Laura B—34
Judy L—43

Contributions September

Anonymity	\$ 125.00
Cabin in the Woods	\$ 50.00
Happy, Joyous & Free	\$ 209.00
Heavy Hitters	\$ 710.00
Living Sober	\$ 500.00
No Name Group	\$ 25.00
One Day At A Time	\$ 168.00
Sisters In Sobriety	\$ 58.24

Congratulations!

*“There is freedom
waiting for you,
On the breezes of the
sky, And you ask
“What if I fall?”
Oh but my darling,
“What if you fly?”
— Erin Hanson*

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**