

# THE JOURNEY AT THE BEACH

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 2 3

*Tradition Nine • “A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”*

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 172*

## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

*“To thine own self be true”*

NAME	YEARS	SOBRIETY DATE	CELEBRATING	WHERE	WHEN
Tim	2		09/02/23	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	9:00 am
Richard B	19	08/30/04	09/05/23	Fresh Air • Crossway Church, West OC	8:00 pm
Krista R	29	09/07/94	09/10/23	Happy Hour • River Church	6:00 pm
Eric O	7	09/08/16	TBD	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	7:30 am
Jake R	6	09/10/17	TBD	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	7:30 am
Dennis M	29		09/16/23	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	9:00 am
Rick S	5	09/05/18	09/16/23	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	9:00 am
Glenn H	38	09/16/85		Assateague Group • Atlantic Club	6:00 pm
Rosemary K	34	09/21/89	09/21/23	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	7:30 am
Sean B	27		09/23/23	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	9:00 am
Angie	2	09/28/23	09/28/22	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	7:30 am
Cynthia W	22	09/05/01	09/29/23	Happy, Joyous and Free • River Church	10:00 am
Mary Ann J	34	09/17/89	09/29/23	Happy, Joyous and Free • River Church	10:00 am
Gail G	28	09/25/95	09/29/23	Happy, Joyous and Free • River Church	10:00 am

Please submit all anniversary information to Carla H at [info@ocaa.org](mailto:info@ocaa.org) by the 28<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month of the anniversary. Include your name, sobriety date, celebration date, where and when. The newsletter is printed on the first Tuesday of every month, so if your sobriety date falls early in the month, we may put your announcement in the prior month's newsletter. Thanks!

*Step Nine • “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”*  
*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 83*

*Ninth Step Prayer • “Higher Power, please show me how to find the way of Patience, Tolerance, Kindness and Love in my Heart, my Mind and my Soul. Lord, show me how to demonstrate these principles to my family and all those about me.”*

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AUGUST 5, 2020 | BY: Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

## Making Amends in Addiction Recovery

One of the telltale symptoms of alcohol or drug addiction is behaving in ways that go against your personal values and standards. That's why the Twelve Step recovery process includes the practice of recognizing how your behavior has harmed others and seeking to repair the mistakes and damage caused during your active addiction. Step Eight and Step Nine of AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) call this approach "making amends":

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

Step 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

On the surface, making amends might sound as simple as offering a sincere apology for your treatment of others, but there's more to this cornerstone Twelve Step practice. Below, experts at Hazelden Betty Ford's Connection™ recovery coaching program answer frequently asked questions about this reconciliation process and why it's so vital to addiction recovery and spiritual health.

### What Is a Direct Amend?

In Twelve Step recovery from alcohol or other drug addiction, a direct amend refers to the act of personally addressing issues with people who have been harmed by our behavior or our treatment of them as a result of addiction. As outlined in Steps 8 and 9, the practice involves going back to those individuals to acknowledge the harm or hurt we have caused them and demonstrating our changed behaviors in order to provide them with the opportunity to heal. Whenever possible, a direct amend is made face-to-face rather than over the phone or by asking someone else to apologize on your behalf.

### What's the Difference between Making Amends and Offering an Apology?

Think of amends as actions taken that demonstrate your new way of life in recovery, whereas apologies are basically words. When you make amends, you acknowledge and align your values to your actions by admitting wrongdoing and then living by your principles.

In addiction, our actions and intentions aren't aligned. For example, we might intend to go to a friend's birthday party, but in actuality, we fail to show up for the event. While we might apologize later for missing the party, our apology consists of words rather than actions or changed behavior. And those words ring hollow when we repeatedly break our promises. So, to truly make amends, we have to offer more than words.

In recovery, our actions and intentions are aligned. An example would be telling someone how sorry you are that you stole from them and actually giving back what you took.

### Are There Times When Direct Amends Are Not Advisable?

Yes. Step Nine states that we make amends "except when to do so would injure them or others." We don't want our actions to cause further damage, harm or stress. Also, we might owe amends to people we can't reach. In those cases, we can make amends in a broader sense by taking actions like donating money, volunteering our time or providing care.

We can also make amends by living very purposefully within the bounds of our principles. This is known as making living amends. For example, if we hurt people with our lying and we cannot make amends without further injuring them, we would make living amends by making a decision to behave and communicate with complete honesty.

It's also important to take great care when making amends to someone who is in active addiction because our primary responsibility is to safeguard our own health and recovery from substance abuse. If making an amends means exposing ourselves to triggering environments, we ought to reconsider and discuss healthy alternatives with a sponsor or addiction counselor.

### Should I Try to Make Amends with Someone Who Doesn't Want to Hear from Me?

No matter how much we feel the need to make things right, forcing another to meet with us or hear from us is not part of the Steps. When those we've hurt are not able or willing to accept our amends, we can still

move in a positive general direction by taking intentional steps to be of service to others or making living amends.

It's important to note that making amends is for the person we hurt. Yes, we partake in the process to "clean up our side of the street," but we do not make amends to clear our conscience or undo our feelings of guilt. If someone does not want to hear from us, we respect that and do our best to move forward with our recoveries.

### How Will Making Amends Help My Recovery?

Taking these actions helps us to separate ourselves from the disease of addiction. We come to understand that we are good people with a bad disease. Steps 8 and 9 help us to move out of the shame we have lived in, shame that feeds the cycle of substance use and addiction. We strengthen and reinforce healthy recovery whenever we do our part to repair relationships or reach out to others with support and understanding.

Think of amends as actions taken that demonstrate your new way of life in recovery

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## What If My Attempt to Make Things Right Goes Wrong and Things Get Worse?

It's important to have a plan in place before we reach out. We can't know for certain how another person will respond—or even how the interaction might affect us emotionally. So be sure to talk with your sponsor and/or support group about your plan in the event that you need support. Remember, this is a Twelve Step process that can provide a platform for healing, but the person we are reaching out to may not be at the same place in healing as we are. We are only in control of our part—making and living the amends. As with alcohol and other drugs, we are also powerless over other people. We cannot control how others respond, whether they will forgive or whether they will hold on to negative feelings or resentments.

In the end, we are not seeking forgiveness. We are seeking accountability for our own actions and holding ourselves to the standards of our own values and our 12 Step program.

## Should I Work on Step Eight Alone?

Generally speaking, people work through the Steps of Alcohol Anonymous with an addiction treatment counselor and/or sponsor. You can also turn to AA's Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (the 12 & 12) for guidance specific to Step 8.

When first writing your list, don't worry about including everyone you have wronged. Start by listing the people closest to you. Over time, as

you strengthen and deepen your recovery from addiction, you will undoubtedly revisit Steps 8 and 9 many times. Eventually you will find you are making amends day by day through the positive actions you routinely take in living by Twelve Step principles.

## What Is the Best Way to Make Amends?

There really isn't a "best way" for everyone. You need to find the approach that works best for you. Talk with your sponsor or others in your recovery community about what has worked for them. If your actions match your intentions and you reach out in person, you are doing the next right thing to right past wrongs. It's simple but not easy. And remember, if you are feeling ashamed about mistakes made and damage done during your using days, you are not your disease.

## How Soon Do I Start to Make Amends Once I Am Sober?

Once you enter into sobriety, there isn't a set timeline for working Steps 8 and 9, so you might want to ask your sponsor and recovery support network for their insights about whether you're ready. In Twelve Step recovery, your pace is your own to determine. No doubt you will experience challenges and setbacks along the way. But by prioritizing your recovery on a daily basis and doing whatever that next right thing might be for you, you will keep moving forward in living a life of good purpose.



## 66th Annual Sessions by the Sea

**Roland E. Powell Convention Center  
Ocean City, MD  
September 5-10, 2023**

[www.sessionsbythesea.com](http://www.sessionsbythesea.com)

**OCEAN CITY INTERGROUP HOSTS**

**ANNUAL AA PICNIC**  **GUEST SPEAKER**

**CATERED BY PIT & PUB**

**FOOD FUN** | **FELLOWSHIP** | **MUSIC GAMES**

Feel free to bring a dessert to share

**SHOWELL PARK  
11281 RACETRACK ROAD  
BERLIN, MD**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7TH  
1:00-5:00 PM** 



# THE JOURNEY AT THE BEACH

## Intergroup

**The Ocean City Area Fellowship Intergroup meets every first Tuesday of the month** at the Atlantic Club, 11827 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, MD 21843 (Route 50 Westbound). All are welcome to attend.

**Next meetings is Tuesday, September 5th at 6:00 pm**

## Election of New Officers

We will be electing officers for the following positions for 2023-2025 term the next time we have a quorum:

- Intergroup Chair
- Alternate Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

In addition, we have positions to fill on the following committees:

- Newsletter - we are looking for a newsletter editor for 2024. If you are interested, please contact Carla H at [info@ocaa.org](mailto:info@ocaa.org) to discuss.
- Public Information - click here for a description: <https://www.aa.org/public-information-committees/>
- Cooperation with the Professional Community - click here for a description: <https://www.aa.org/Cooperation-with-the-Professional-Community>

If you have an interest in any of the above service positions, please attend the next Intergroup meeting or contact us at [info@ocaa.org](mailto:info@ocaa.org). Ocean City Area Intergroup Homegroup Representatives or Alternates are eligible to propose new officers or run for office themselves. Each group receives one vote toward the election of new officers. Please plan on having a Representative from your Homegroup attend the next meeting to help us see our way forward.

## AA Meetings

Please visit the [ocaa.org/meetings](http://ocaa.org/meetings) for the latest updates.

## Inquires

24 Hour Hotline: **410-600-5219**

Email: [info@ocaa.org](mailto:info@ocaa.org)



The Spectrum of Horsepower at the 2023 White Marlin Open

### I am responsible

When anyone, anywhere,  
reaches out for help, I want  
the hand of A.A. always to be there.  
And for that: I am responsible