



Florence Rankin—A Feminine Victory
New York, New York
Original Manuscript and page 217 in 1st Edition
First woman to get sober in AA
Date of Sobriety: March 1937

COMMUNIQUÉ

THE KEY TO FREEDOM

(Interview of Nancy E., AKA “Nancy Shoes”)



This interview is dedicated to the memory of the very first woman who entered the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Ms. Florence Rankin was the first woman to claim her seat in this program to get sober in AA, even for a short time. She came to AA in New York, in March 1937. She had several slips, but was sober over a year when she wrote her story for the Big Book. (There are no coincidences is G-d’s world) Florence is the reason our big book was title as it is, Alcoholics Anonymous.

It just so happened that the sober men in that New York group had come to a decision to name the big book “One Hundred Men.” Although the only women to enter AA as of yet, Florence stood her ground and vociferously argued against the title. The small, quiet alcoholic had the courage and the strength to change the minds of all of the men in the room that day. Sadly enough, just as the new books were rolling off the press, Florence relapsed and eventually passed away in April, 1943. Rumors have swirled throughout time that Florence committed suicide; there are no official documents to support the rumor and some believe it may have been meningitis. When the name Nancy E. is mentioned, the memory of Florence Rankin immediately emerges. Nancy E. has the courage and tenacity like no other and has helped so many women in this program and continues to do so. Nancy E. is not afraid to stand up and say what needs to be said; nor will she pull her hand away from any alcoholic who asks

for help. Florence would have been proud of Nancy, proud that her legacy of courage and of using your voice to make changes is alive and well here in Spring Hill, Florida.

This is Nancy's story:

When New York police officers arrived on the scene of a one car traffic crash, they were shocked when they pried open the door and found a beautiful young woman with her teeth implanted so far into the dash board that they had to use their hands to remove her face from it. On her 21st birthday Nancy stole her boyfriend's car so she could meet her drug dealer. Nancy felt guilty, miserable and had lost all hope, so she tried to commit suicide by driving her car directly into a parked car. She was travelling at such a high rate of speed that, as a result of the crash, Nancy's front teeth and face were embedded into the dashboard. Nancy was handcuffed arrested and her teeth were left behind still ingrained within the dashboard of her boyfriend's Mustang. As a child Nancy always felt different and was fearful and uncomfortable in front of people. That was until she downed her first bottle of vodka in the 8th grade. Finally, for the first time, she felt normal in front of other people and her fear immediately evaporated. Nancy was only 13 at that time.

Nancy was a young girl with a mother and father who loved her and who wanted a good life for her. Nonetheless, she felt different and detached from everyone else. Drinking and drug use was the only way to feel normal in her world. After her first drink, Nancy immediately became a truant, living in cars and robbing houses for money to obtain drugs and alcohol. And, although she loved her family and was very attached to her mother and father, Nancy's behavior was so out of control her parents were forced to put her in foster homes. In fact, at one point, while still living with her family, her parents were forced to place chicken wire on her bedroom windows to keep her from sneaking out. Eventually, as time passed, the chicken wire was used to keep Nancy from coming home. After her car accident, Nancy lost her license for 10 years. She rode a bicycle everywhere she went.

Nancy was now homeless. Her boyfriend at the time shared Nancy with drug dealers so they could obtain their drugs. Nancy was arrested once again, after she lifted another vehicle and was caught with a gun in the car. Thankfully, her boyfriend's father was an attorney in Suffolk County, where her charges were pending. He told the Judge that he was not there to help his son (Nancy's boyfriend) because he was a piece of crap. He told the Judge that he was there to help Nancy. Nancy avoided prison and was sentenced to

serve time in a detox facility. Of course, Nancy made sure her boyfriend also came to detox with her. At one point, the detox facility took all of the patients on a trip outside the facility in a bus. Naturally, Nancy smelled an opportunity and ran away from the group, hopped on a bus headed to Long Beach. The first place Nancy went when she arrived in Long Beach was a local bar. Nancy found her next boyfriend. He was wearing a suit and Nancy immediately thought, “he is going to save me.”

Instead, her well-dressed boyfriend was abusive and burned her body with cigarettes. Nancy ended up living in abandoned buildings and sleeping in boxes with two black eyes and no teeth. Nancy was homeless again, alone, young and had no money. In order to survive Nancy lifted food from stores and ate out of garbage cans. Nancy thought she was at the end. She felt what the book describes this state of mind as “Incomprehensible demoralization.” With no one to call, no one to protect her, no roof over her head or food in her stomach she lost all hope.

They say “don’t quit before the miracle occurs.” Nancy did stay alive sleeping in a box long enough for her sister to make it to Long Beach to search for her. Her sister stopped everyone she spotted to show them pictures of her sister. She heard the same response over and over again, “yeah, that looks like a girl we know but she has no teeth and she always has bruises on her.” By the grace of G-d, she found Nancy. Nancy’s sister could still see the beautiful, kind, funny kid inside of her and she was not going to let Nancy give up. Nancy went immediately to a detox center with her sister. Nancy’s mother appeared at one of the family group meetings in the facility. She told Nancy that her grandfather was an alcoholic. Nancy finally understood why she drank the way she did.

Nancy was three months sober when she was released from detox. One day, she was at a laundry mat when she saw smoke coming from the woods. She immediately went home and changed into a skirt. She looked like a prostitute. She went back to the woods and found a group getting high. They asked her if she wanted any and that was the day Nancy turned into a crack addict. For Nancy it wasn’t until she reached the point where she was on her hands and knees digging through the carpet for drugs where she knew it had to stop. She could not continue to live this way. She got on her knees and prayed. She told her drug buddy, Eddie, that she was quitting and getting sober. Eddie agreed to get sober with her.

But of course, the old saying, “we can quit tomorrow” was the conclusion between the two. Eddie and Nancy stayed up the entire night getting high and drinking. And, as luck would have it, Nancy was arrested once again.

The very next day, Nancy begged G-d for help; begged G-d to help her stay sober and live a decent life. G-d listened to Nancy. HE was always waiting for her behind the door. She only had to turn the knob and open the door to see that he had waited for her the entire time. G-d never left Nancy, Nancy stopped talking to G-d. HE scooped her up into his large hands and covered her and protected her. Nancy felt every minute of her contact with her higher power that day. She had a spiritual experience that described in our big book. After her encounter with G-D, Nancy has not had a single drink or drug.

She went back to the bar where she knew she could find Eddie to show him she did it. Eddie had already died of a heroin overdose. Something changed inside of Nancy after she begged G-d for help and she admitted herself into outpatient drug and alcohol treatment. Nancy did not miss one day of treatment. Her mother and father had to drop her off and pick her up everyday. Nancy remembers the day she yelled, “I believe in G-d!” The compulsion to drink or drug was completely lifted from her. Nancy went to meetings and miracles were slowly occurring in her life. Nancy’s mother invited her back to her childhood home for Thanksgiving. While there, a girl Nancy became friends with in meetings called to check up on her. This was the first person Nancy could actually talk to and have a friendship with. Nancy eventually had to end the friendship and two years later her old friend overdosed and died. Nancy worked her program diligently because it was her life vest. She was on her 9th step when she attended her old friend’s funeral and she made her amends through the girl’s brother.

On Nancy’s one year sobriety anniversary she met the man who would become her husband. The promises were coming true. Nancy learned what love really looked like. And, she learned that love did not include physical and emotional abuse and drug use. There are no coincidences in G-d’s world. When Nancy was homeless living in Long Beach the train conductors stopped and left food and drinks for the homeless. Little did she know then that the train conductor who left food for her would become her husband. Nancy started acquiring things she never imagined possessing. Throughout her drug use and homelessness Nancy always wanted one simple thing: a key. She never had a key to her home or for any car she

drove. However, because she was staying sober by helping others, cleaning house and talking to G-d on a daily basis, Nancy got her first key to her first car that actually belonged to her. Nancy continued to enhance her relationship with G-d, she dove deeper into service work and she continued to help other women stay sober. Nancy received more keys. She had a key to an apartment she shared with other girls in the program, her husband gave her a key to his home when she moved in with him, she received a key after her and her husband purchased their first condo together and she did get that key to her own Mustang.

Things I must earn. Over time, by proving her sobriety to her family she earned their trust back. One of the greatest gifts Nancy could have imagined. As she continued to do the next right thing, pick up the phone when someone in AA needs help, the promises started coming true for her. She had her first beautiful baby girl and her father, who she hurt so many times while she was using, asked her to be the one to take care of him as he aged. He also asked Nancy to be the one to take care of her mother when her mother could no longer take care of herself. Nancy's father died on August 25, 2003. Nancy lived with no regrets and with a full heart after her father passed away. Nancy was also able to make a living amends to her father and mother by caring for her mother until she passed away on June 6, 2011. Hearing Nancy's story was an honor. She is a walking example of the big book and she always puts her hand out when someone needs help.

A sober concrete marshmallow.

TRADITION FOUR GROUP CHECKLIST

1. Do I insist that there are only a few *right* ways of doing things in AA?
2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of Loners in Alaska? Of Internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?
3. Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths—his lengths, not mine—to stay sober?
6. Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

HISTORY CORNER

ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

(A man way ahead of his time)

In my judgment such of us who have never fallen victims have been spared more by the absence of appetite than from any mental or moral superiority over those who have. Indeed, I believe if we take habitual drunkards as a class, their heads and their hearts will bear an advantageous comparison with those of any other class."

"When one who has long been known as a victim of intemperance bursts the fetters that have bound him, and appears before his neighbors 'clothed and in his right mind,' a redeemed specimen of long-lost humanity, and stands up, with tears of joy trembling in his eyes, to tell of the miseries once endured, now to be endured no more forever: of his once naked and starving children, now clad and fed comfortable; of a wife long weighed down with woe, weeping, and a broken heart, now restored to health, happiness, and a renewed affection; and how easily it is all done, once it is resolved to be done-how simple his language! Human feelings cannot resist."



HELP WANTED! The COMMUNIQUE wants to hear from you. You have the Power to make change but only if you truly have the courage to use your voice just as Florence Rankin did and how Nancy E. does in her daily life. Living only in the solution, please send us a note or email and write down what concerns you about AA as it is today and a few ideas about how to fix it. Give a special shout out to someone who goes above and beyond to help a fellow alcoholic and we will give them our thanks in the next edition. Write to us about service work. Write about anything and we will give you a personal response in our next edition. Feel free to send to my email at:
communique@aahernando.org





SOBER ANNIVERSARIES



<u>All Good Group</u>	
Bob H.	32 Years
Dorsey P.	15 Years
<u>Aripeka Open Speaker</u>	
Ralph M.	49 Years
Nan	33 Years
Bruce	30 Years
Neil	15 Years
<u>Happy Hour</u>	
Sam R.	3 Years
Carla A.	2 Years
<u>Heavy Hitters</u>	
Sue S.	36 Years
Constance Z.	11 Years
<u>Hope Group</u>	
Jackie K.	41 Years
Fernando M.	5 Years
<u>Ladies Big Book</u>	
Kathy K.	31 Years
Tracey G.	11 Years
Linda M.	5 Year
Chrystal	4 Years
Lori D.	Years
<u>Let Go & Let G-D</u>	
Gindee	23 Years
<u>More Serenity Sisters</u>	
Jane B.	32 Years
<u>The Promises Group</u>	
Patti B.	33 Years

<u>Hernando Beach</u>	
Stephanie	34 Years
Tia Mc	20 Years
<u>The Promises Group</u>	
Patti B.	33 Years
<u>Rough Road Group</u>	
Al S.	46 Years
Jim H.	31 Years
Jim B.	10 Years
Jon G.	8 Years
Melanie D.	7 Years
<u>Serendipity Sisters</u>	
Linda M.	5 Years
<u>Young Men's Group</u>	
Bob E.	32 Years
<u>Spring Hill Monday Night</u>	
Roger L.	34 Years
Richard N.	33 Years
<u>Ridge Manor Big Book</u>	
Nolan	34 Years
Paul	21 Years
Gary	7 Years
<u>Serenity Sisters</u>	
Joan G.	49 Years
Linda C.	49 Years
Maureen B.	40 Years
Candy M.	20 Years
Carrie P.	1 Year

<u>Principles Before Personalities</u>	
Ed. F	30 Years
Melanie D.	7 Years
Trevor	2 Years
<u>Women's Serenity Sunday Morning</u>	
Jane B.	32 Years
Kathy K.	31 Years
Tia Mc	20 Years
Linda M.	5 Years
<u>Step in the Right Direction</u>	
Doreen L.	39 Years
Jack L.	7 Years
<u>Stepsister's</u>	
Lori D.	2 Years
<u>Steps We Took</u>	
Bob H.	32 Years
Jack L.	7 Years
<u>There is a Solution</u>	
Dawn S.	4 Years
<u>Tranquility Group</u>	
Louis S.	32 Years
<u>Umbrella Group</u>	
Ed G.	30 Years
Tom C.	10 Years
Fernando M.	6 Years
Sharon G.	1 Year

Please Email Mary T. all Group and Individual Anniversaries by the 20th of each month at: Ctyanks2@tampabay.rr.com

DISTRICT 13 TREASURER'S REPORT
APRIL 2020

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>DISTRICT</u>		<u>CORRECTIONS</u>		<u>SUNTRUST BANK BALANCES</u>
	<u>APR</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>YTD</u>	
AlGood		30.00			<u>SAVINGS-PRUDENT RESERVE</u>
Aripeka Big Book					Beginning 4/1/20 1000.38
Aripeka Open Speaker					Ending 4/30/20 1000.39
Audio Big Book					
Brksvl Heavy Hitters					<u>CHECKING ACCOUNT</u>
Easy Does It					Beginning Balance 2479.77
Fellowship We Crave					Group Deposits 603.55
Friendship Group					Expenditures <u>(215.26)</u>
Fun & Frolic Group					Ending 4/30/20 2868.07
Happy Hour Group					
Hernando Beach		25.00			Outstanding/Uncashed
Hope Group					#305 Church (1 st Q) (45.00)
LadiesBigBookStudy					#306 Intergroup (15.00)
Let Go & Let God	50.00	50.00			April Archives rent
Let's Get Serious					ACTUAL BALANCE2808.07
Life Goes On Group					
Living Sober					<u>EXPENSE DETAIL</u>
More Serenity Sisters					AAWS
PrinciplesB4Personal	214.27	285.87	60.00	80.00	Accessibilities Comm.
Promises Group					Archives Committee
Ridge Manor Big Book		40.00		130.00	Archives rent to IG 15.00
Rough Roads Group	20.00	45.00		51.00	Area Assembly
Sat. Night Beginners					Bank Fees/Checks
Serenity Sisters Group					CPC/PI
Singleness of Purpose		9.00			Communique Comm. 200.27
Spring Hill Group					#272 Susan G
Step in the Rt. Direction					Corrections Comm.
Step Sisters Group		20.00			Events/Workshops
Steps We Took					Gas Expense
Sunset Group		240.00		100.00	Grapevine Committee
The Usual Suspects					Literature Committee
There is a Solution		75.00			Office Supplies/Postage
Thursday Night Step					P.O.Box Rent
Tranquility Group					Printing
Umbrella Group	38.00	63.40			Rent-church donation 45.00
W.I.S.E. Women					(Jan - Mar)
Women's Serenity		21.14			Other - DCM debit card 14.99
Young Men's Group					purchase of ZOOM
Individual Contribution		173.00			subscription 4/28/2020
Intergroup	221.29				
TOTAL	543.56		TOTAL	60.00	TOTAL EXPENSES275.26

<u>Monthly Contributions to D13</u>			<u>Monthly Contributions to Corrections</u>			<u>CORRECTIONS COMMITTEE</u>	
Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	Past Balance	994.73
80.40	379.00	543.56	0.00	240.00	60.00	Contributions-Apr	<u>80.00</u>
YTD	1361.70		YTD	351.00		Total on Deposit	1074.73