OTTAWA INTERGROUP OFFICE
211 Bronson Avenue, Suite 108
Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 6H5
Open for Literature Sales
Mon - Fri 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
(Subject to volunteer availability—Call in advance)

GENERAL INFORMATION
Telephone: 613.237.6000
10 am - 10 pm, 7 days a week
Email: info@ottawaaa.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
newsletter@ottawaaa.org
Article submission deadline is last day of previous month for following month

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Vice-Chair (Sandy K) ▶ vice@ottawaaa.org
Secretary (Anne D) ▶ secretary@ottawaaa.org
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Literature (Chris J) ▶ literature@ottawaaa.org
Spring Conference (Caterina C) ▶ spring@ottawaaa.org
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OTTAWA GENERAL SERVICE DISTRICTS AND COMMITTEES

District 54 - Ottawa East (Darlene K) ▶ district54@ottawaaa.org
District 58 - Ottawa Centre (Frank V) ▶ district58@ottawaaa.org
District 62 - Ottawa West (Patrick G) ▶ district62@ottawaaa.org
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Corrections Facilities and Treatment (Andy McC) ▶ cft@ottawaaa.org
Archives (Bruce C) ▶ archives@ottawaaa.org
Telephone Answering is looking for service-minded AA members to answer phones from the office or home. To pick up a shift, check out the online schedule at http://interactive.ottawaaa.org/tas. Shifts in red are available.

Meeting Guide App Now in Ottawa! A universal meeting list app for AA members by AA members! With information from 33 AA organizations (intergroups, districts) and 17,767 meetings, including Toronto, Philadelphia, Dallas, San Francisco and the Continental Europe Region. Android or iPhone (iOS8+) required. Download on Google Play or Apple App Store. For more information, visit www.meetingguide.org.

The Ottawa AA Website is now using secure 256-bit SSL encryption (similar to banking websites) to increase the privacy and security of members and the general public who visit and use our site.

Literature can now be purchased one hour before and one hour after Intergroup Meetings. A selection of Grapevine books are available for purchase, as well as AA meeting signs to hang outside meeting locations.

Reminder: Please ensure to email meeting changes or closures to info@ottawaaa.org. This includes holidays or if a venue is unavailable. It is important the website reflect accurate meeting information for newcomers.

Podium/Hill Group is now four days a week. Meetings are held Tuesday through Friday at 12:15 pm at (St. Andrew’s Church (82 Kent Street). The new Thursday meeting format is Twelve and Twelve Step Study, and the Friday meeting changes to a Big Book Study.

The Friday 8:00 pm Serenity group at St Martins Anglican Church (2120 Prince Charles Road) is celebrating their 40 year group anniversary on October 14. Held at regular time in large room downstairs. Refreshments provided.

The Thursday 8:00 pm Fireside group at First Baptist Church (140 Laurier Avenue West) is relocating permanently to Room 221 at the Bronson Centre (211 Bronson Avenue) beginning September 22.

The Wednesday 6:00 pm Free Spirit meeting at Shawenjeagamik Centre (510 Rideau Street) is closed until further notice (as of September 7, 2016).

The Friday 11:00 am McNabb Sunday Morning at McNabb Community Centre (180 Percy Street) are closed on September 4, 11 and 18 due to renovations.

The Sunday 6:00 pm Carry the Message a meeting at McNabb Community Centre (180 Percy Street) is relocated to Room 109 at the Bronson Centre (211 Bronson Avenue) on September 4, 11 and 18 due to renovations. The meeting will return to its normal location on September 25.

The Sunday 11:00 am McNabb Sunday Morning and at McNabb Community Centre (180 Percy Street) are closed on September 4, 11 and 18 due to renovations.

New meeting: The Wednesday 8:00 pm Farmpoint 12x12 began on July 6 at Centre Communautaire Farm Point (331 chemin de la Rivière) in Chelsea, Quebec.

The 8:00 pm Friday Night Discussion group at Northwestern United Church (241 Northwestern Avenue) is temporarily closed pending new location (as of May 20, 2016).
It has occurred to me that the diplomats in fellowship express opinions dressed up in the form of experiences. Since I don't apply filters to what I'm saying or write, you clearly know the direction I come from.

Many a story has been told, listen to and written about, what a sponsor is, should or ought to be.

Once a year, first Saturday in March, is the Sponsorship Seminar at the "Back to Basics" meeting hall. An excellent day for the one who is in search of what this sponsorship business is all about.

One time, at the local AA club, when it was on Wellington, between Parkdale and Holland, two guys asked me to sponsor them. "Sure thing guys. Here are the basic rules I'd like you to observe . . . ". I never saw them again, nor did I ever hear from them again.

Was your (high) school teacher a buddy you hung out with at the local (coffee) bar? No? Then why is it expected of the sponsor? Neither is the sponsor merely a sounding board. It's part of the deal but, not all of the deal.

The people at the Monday Beacon Hill meeting were patient with me. One of the members, Jon, suggested I talk to his "shrink". I did see Jon's shrink who told me on an occasion, when the patient tells how he wants to be helped, he is not ready for help. And no yeah buts about it!!! He also told me another day, "... Don't ever confuse love with lust. Love is love and lust is lust. The one has nothing to do with the other . . . ". WOW!

The longtimers at my beginnings were nothing but tough characters, told me what they thought I needed to know and also what not to bother with. These guys didn't care how I felt after they drilled me. In particular the guys from Tuesday-Friday. Their motto was: Don't drink and show up for the drill. All else will fall into place.

Try that one on for size nowadays and see how far you get sponsoring someone. Guaranteed nowhere!

Question: How does one parent? Answer: Like one was parented. Sponsorship is no different. For the most part.

When I wanted to be Intergroup (IG) chair I wrote a campaign letter I distributed at the following IG meeting. I did not first pass it by the sponsor. Major boo boo. The response was such that, I somehow managed to survive the calamity and became IG chair for '85.

I have had since the beguiling pleasurable (learning) experiences being of help, over the years, to several people. One even was an Al-Anon.

My approach to helping is less radical than the way I was treated. I believe in easing the way into the Steps. That way the AA philosophy will make more sense to an individual. As a sponsor I am far more congenial than the old old-timers were with me. It's only because of my supreme stubbornness, and too, AA being the last open door before the dump, that I but reluctantly surrendered.

I immensely dislike the word sponsor. The word sponsor has too much authority attached to it. A reflex from my growing up time. The word helper or tutor has a more gentile feeling and sound to it. When I now have a need to know, I consult someone, or research online, or buy a book on the subject. Books, like the Big Book, are really a great teaching sources.

The most neglected Step, of all the Steps, is the second part of Step 1. The guy, from whom I sought guidance, asked me first off, "How manageable is your life?" . . . He stomped me, but good. I have since adopted his approach.

I have not had an easy time being on the receiving end of sponsorships. Neither do people have the easiest of times with me. I take the responsibility of helping someone extremely serious.

So much for a quickie re: my sponsorship experiences to date.

PS: Don't take yourself more seriously than you actually are.

And: Turn what you do for a living into a hobby, and you will have nothing but free-time all your life.

I'm real alcoholic, and I am called Ozzie.
No matter how much sobriety you have, find out how you can help and be a part of the greater whole. All AA members are welcome to attend any of the following committees:

**OTTAWA INTEGROUP MONTHLY MEETING**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Mac Hall)
Second Wednesday (7:00 pm)
Sep 14 Oct 12 Nov 9 Dec 14

**DISTRICT 54 MEETING**
(Overbrook Community Centre, 33 Quill Street)
First Thursday (7:30 pm)
Oct 6 Nov 3 Dec 1

**DISTRICT 58 MEETING**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Room 106)
Second Monday (7:00 pm)
Oct 10 Nov 14 Dec 12

**DISTRICT 62 MEETING**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Room 110)
Second Monday (7:30 pm)
Oct 10 Nov 14 Dec 12

**DISTRICT 62 TRADITIONS WORKSHOP**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Room 110)
Second Monday (6:00 pm)
Oct 10 Nov 14 Dec 12

**CORRECTIONS FACILITIES AND TREATMENT**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Room 106)
Fourth Tuesday (6:30 pm)
Sep 27 Oct 25 Nov 22 Dec 27

**PUBLIC INFORMATION (SEPTEMBER MEETING WAS SEP 13)**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Room 108)
Third Monday (6:30 pm)
Sep 13* Oct 17 Nov 21 Dec 19

**COOPERATION WITH PROFESSIONALS**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Room 108)
Third Monday (6:30 pm)
Sep 19 Oct 17 Nov 21 Dec 19

**OTTAWA ARCHIVES**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Room 108)
Third Wednesday (7:00 pm)
Sep 21 Oct 19 Nov 16 Dec 21

**FALL CONFERENCE**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Check whiteboard for room location)
Sundays Sep 11 Sep 25 Oct 2 Oct 16 (4:00 pm)

**ALKATHON**
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue - Check whiteboard for room location)
Sundays Sep 18 Oct 2 Oct 16 Nov 13 Nov 20 Dec 4 Dec 11 Dec 18 (1:00 pm)

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

- When Bill W placed that infamous call from the Mayflower Hotel, he had to place 11 calls. Each call cost 5 cents which in today's currency would be about 55 dollars. Bill was willing to go to any length...
- **THE DOCTOR’S OPINION** began on page 1 in the first edition of the Big Book, not Bill's story.
- The Big Book has been translated into 68 different languages. If you count English, that would make 69.
- **Bill W's primary reason for writing the 12 & 12 was to get members educated on the Traditions. New essays on the Steps were an inducement to get members to purchase a book on the Traditions. Doctor Bob's illness affected Bill profoundly. It accelerated his plan to have the Conference and groups take over the day to day workings of AA.**
On the fourth paragraph on page 76, the "Big Book" provides us with some insight as to how to approach some of those to whom we owe amends. Page 76, paragraph four:

"Probably there are still some misgivings. As we look over the list of business acquaintances and friends we have hurt, we may feel diffident (which means lacking confidence) about going to some of them on a spiritual basis. Let us be reassured. To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach. We might prejudice them. At the moment we are trying to put our lives in order. But this is NOT an end in itself. Our REAL PURPOSE is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."

In the last sentence of this paragraph, the "Big Book" clearly states our purpose for living. It tells us why we are here — to serve God and the people about us.

In Step Seven it says: "I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to You and my fellows." Now in Step Nine it says: "At the moment we are trying to put our lives in order. BUT THIS IS NOT AN END IN ITSELF. Our REAL purpose is to FIT OURSELVES to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." So our making amends is part of how God brings fulfillment to what we're praying for in Step 7!

The book continues by asking us to let our actions, rather than our words, demonstrate to others that we have changed. Walking the walk is more important than just talking the talk. Starting with line four of page 77, the book states:

"It is SELDOM WISE to approach an individual, who still smarts from our injustice to him, and announce that we have gone religious. In the prize ring, this would be called leading with the chin. Why lay ourselves open to being branded fanatics or religious bores? We may kill a future opportunity to carry a beneficial message. But our man is SURE to be impressed with a sincere desire to set right the wrong. (So again, it says that we are there to set right the wrong, NOT to fix the relationship. The book continues.) He is going to be MORE interested in a demonstration of good will than in our talk of spiritual discoveries.

We don't use this as an excuse for shying away from the subject of God. When it will serve any good purpose, we are willing to announce our convictions with tact and common sense."

One of the most difficult amends to make is to someone we genuinely do not like. But, whether we like them or not, we MUST proceed. The text continues:

"The question of how to approach the man we hated will arise (they're talking here about someone on our resentment list). It may be he has done us MORE harm than we have done HIM and, though we may have acquired a better attitude toward him, we are still not too keen about admitting our faults. (The reason why we probably have a better attitude toward our enemies is because back in the Fourth Step we were asked to forgive and pray for those we felt had harmed us since they LIKE OURSELVES are spiritually blocked off whenever anyone brings about harm. The book continues.)

Nevertheless, with a person we dislike, we take the bit in our teeth. It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it much more beneficial to us. WE GO TO HIM in a helpful and forgiving spirit, confessing OUR former ill feeling and expressing OUR regret."

So the book gives us an important attitude we should have when going to make amends to someone we do not like. Our attitude needs to have a helpful and forgiving spirit, and in a few sentences it says that our manner needs to be calm, frank, and open.

In the next paragraph, the text even provides us with instructions on what to say and what NOT to say:

"Under NO condition do we criticize such a person or argue. Simply tell him that we will NEVER get over drinking until we have done our UTMOST to straighten out the past. (This last line speaks directly to those of you who will be or have in the past made a beginning but lost interest halfway through the amends process. If that be the case, we need to ask ourselves this simple question: Does my lack of willingness to move forward with making amends have anything to do with whether I drink again or not? It's an important consideration to make. The book continues.) We are there to sweep off OUR side of the street, realizing that NOTHING worthwhile can be accomplished UNTIL we do so, NEVER trying to tell him what HE should do. HIS faults are NOT discussed. We stick to OUR OWN. If our manner is calm, frank, and open, we will be gratified with the result.

In nine cases out of ten the unexpected happens. (That's 90% of the time.) Sometimes the man we are calling upon admits his own fault, so feuds of years’ standing melt away in an
hour. RARELY do we fail to make satisfactory progress. Our former enemies sometimes praise what we are doing and wish us well. Occasionally, they will offer assistance. It should NOT matter, however, if someone does throw us out of his office. We have made our demonstration, done our part. It's water over the dam."

The "Big Book" explains what to do about our debts. We may not like the sacrifice required to make good on our bills, but sacrifice we must. The process forces us to rely on God for guidance, which takes us out of self-will, and into God's Will. Under God's direction, we find it MUCH easier to make restitution than we EVER thought possible. In the middle of page 78, the book states:

"Most alcoholics owe money. (Of course, that's an understatement and should say, "ALL alcoholics owe money!) We do NOT dodge our creditors. Telling them what we are trying to do, we make no bones about our drinking; they usually know it anyway, whether we think so or not. Nor are we afraid of disclosing our alcoholism on the theory it may cause financial harm. Approached in this way, the most ruthless creditor will sometimes surprise us. Arranging the best deal we can (and I'd like to add that we need to follow through with this plan) we let these people know we are sorry. Our drinking has made us slow to pay. (Now here's a warning.) We MUST lose our fear of creditors NO MATTER HOW FAR WE HAVE TO GO, for we are liable to drink IF we are afraid to face them."

The next paragraph deals with criminal offenses:

"Perhaps we have committed a criminal offense which might land us in jail if it were known to the authorities. We may be short in our accounts and unable to make good. We have already admitted this in confidence to another person, but we are sure we would be imprisoned or lose our job if it were known. Maybe it's only a petty offense such as padding the expense account. Most of us have done that sort of thing. Maybe we are divorced, and have remarried but haven't kept up the alimony to number one. She is indignant about it, and has a warrant out for our arrest. That's a common form of trouble too."

Next the book instructs us again to ask God for guidance. This reliance upon God is ESSENTIAL if we are to outgrow the fears that have separated us from our true selves, our Creator, and others. The book continues:

"Although these reparations (or amends) take innumerable forms, there are some general principles which we find guiding. Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to ANY lengths to find a spiritual experience (which of course is AA's solution to alcoholism), (now here's a little prayer) we ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing, NO MATTER WHAT the personal consequences may be. We may lose our position or reputation or face jail, but we are willing. WE HAVE to be. WE MUST not shrink at ANYTHING."

Next is an example of how to proceed when OTHER people may be affected. Here, EXTREME caution needs to be taken:

"Usually, however, other people are involved. (Here's a warning) Therefore, we are not to be the hasty and foolish martyr who would needlessly sacrifice others to save himself from the alcoholic pit. A man we know had remarried. Because of resentment and drinking, he had not paid alimony to his first wife. She was furious. She went to court and got an order for his arrest. He had commenced our way of life, had secured a position, and was getting his head above water. It would have been impressive heroics if he had walked up to the Judge and said, "Here I am."

"We thought he ought to be willing to do that if necessary, but if he were in jail he could provide nothing for either family. We suggested he write his first wife admitting his faults and asking forgiveness. He did, and also sent a small amount of money. He told her what he would try to do in the future. He said he was perfectly willing to go to jail is she insisted. Of course she did not, and the whole situation has long since been adjusted."

The "Big Book" suggests we ask others for help before we make some of our more difficult amends. We need direction, preferably from someone who understands and has experienced the inventory and restitution process. We MUST make SURE we do not create further harm to others as we clean up OUR side of the street. At the top of page 80, notice the directions of what to do, and please notice the five specific points the book now makes:

"Before taking drastic action which might implicate other people we (1) secure their consent. If we have obtained permission, have (2) consulted with others, (3) asked God to help and (4) the drastic step is indicated we (5) MUST not shrink."

(There you have it, in two places above, we must stay dry throughout the entire 12 step process, we must not get wet, WE MUST NOT SHRINK.)

So it says that we need to (1) ask the people who will be affected (like a business partner or our family) if it is OK with them that we make this amend, (2) talked with our support group and others that may have made a similar amend, (3) pray to ask God to help us decide what to do, and (4) the amend still seems like it is the right thing to do, we then (5) MUST not balk at going through with setting right the wrong.

The spiritual life is NOT a theory. We HAVE to LIVE it (Again, the book is saying that our program needs to be more than some mental idea. IT MUST be a motivating and growing positive way of life. The book continues). Unless one's family expresses a desire to live upon spiritual principles we think we ought NOT to urge them. We should NOT talk incessantly to them about spiritual matters. They will change in time. Our BEHAVIOR will convince them MORE than our words. (One of Dr. Bob's most popular quotes is, "Carry the message, and if you must—use words." Walking the walk is so much more important than just talking the talk. The book continues.) We must remember that ten or twenty years of drunkenness would make a skeptic out of anyone."

Here we're told that in order to achieve the vital psychic change, we HAVE to LIVE the A.A. program. So, we don't just TAKE the Steps. We practice these principles on a DAILY basis.

Excerpt from Barefoot Bill's essay on Step 8 and 9. For the complete transcript, visit http://www.barefootsworld.net.
I would like to be able to say that in early recovery I have taken up windsurfing, enjoyed several canoe trips, and started painting. Perhaps these things will come later, but for now I am finding myself doing things that I often do not want to do. Meetings, step work, journaling, prayer, and meditation are not the first things that come to mind when I think of summer. But I have begun to understand the nature of spirituality and the effort that goes into establishing connections with my higher power, my true self, and the people and world around me. I used to think that recovery was like a moving sidewalk in an airport that I could hop on and be conveniently whisked away to where I wanted to go. Now I liken it to a set of stairs with all my baggage. It's a good thing I get to throw away some of that baggage along the way.

One of the more difficult yet rewarding challenges is learning to cultivate the ability to peacefully abide in the present moment. To choose to stay with my breath and intentionally not follow my thoughts to their rational or irrational conclusions and fantasies. I have realized that my true self—my consciousness, is not the sum of my thoughts. I can access the simple yet elusive peace and contentment that is all too often buried beneath layers of ego and the bondage of self.

In my experience, a regular commitment to formal meditation practice is very helpful to achieve this sense of well being. I started with a small commitment of around 15 minutes a day, aiming for daily practice but understanding that if I "sit" just four times a week then I'm doing alright. There are many places that offer group meditation sessions and these can be very helpful. Not only can you talk to experienced people about the obstacles you face in your practice, but if you are new to meditation like I was, then you may feel a little less awkward sitting alone in silence. I found it helpful to remember that it is not possible to meditate "the wrong way"; and that like recovery, it is not a linear process. I may have a wonderfully peaceful sitting one day and find it difficult to concentrate and quiet the mind for a week afterwards.

Everyone's body is different and it took me months to find a position that I could hold comfortably for extended periods. It is important to experiment, and it's not cheating to meditate sitting in a chair or lying down. I often do so if I do not have a suitable cushion to sit on. Very energetic people may find that slow walking meditation is perfect for them. However, I prefer a traditional sitting meditation and there a few general guidelines that I found helpful to follow. If you are sitting cross-legged, try to make sure the knees are lower than the hips by sitting on a firm cushion (I put large books under a cushion to elevate my hips). Ideally the lowered legs and knees should take some weight off the bum to allow for the natural curve of the spine. Tension in my jaw was often hard to release until I learned to place the tip of the tongue behind my top front teeth to keep my lips slightly parted. I keep my eyes half open with my chin slightly tucked in and my gaze directed gently downwards towards the ground. From there the instructions are deceptively simple: breathe naturally in and out through the nose with a singular focus on the sensations of the breath. The abdomen moving in and out, the air as it fills the nose and lungs, or perhaps the subtle feeling on the tip of the nose as the air rushes by. This has proved surprisingly difficult to do at first. So many thoughts come to mind and I sometimes find myself in a far away place with no idea how I got there. When that happens you gently stop and return focus to the breath. I found it helpful to acknowledge my thoughts without judgement by calmly saying in my mind, "Oh! I am thinking." There huge variety of techniques for meditation and this describes the methods that I gravitated towards.

This simple practice of sitting with my breath extends clarity, peace, and contentment in my daily life. I find myself able to recognize my thoughts for exactly what they are—just thoughts! And they often have very little bearing on what I am doing whether I am struggling to pay attention at a meeting, riding the bus, or trying to sleep at the end of a day. It is a daily struggle to set some time aside to not think because there always seems to be something more important or exciting to do. And so I remind myself that for a long time nothing in my life ever changed because nothing ever changed.

PEACEFUL ABIDING
BY MATTHEW S.

PHOTO BY OZZIE L.
ICY, ICY, ICY……PAA, PAA, PAA. The chant of thousands of young people at the 58th International Young Peoples Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous. The atmosphere was electric with laughter, love, and recovery.

I cannot sum up the weekend in a couple of paragraphs so I will try and explain the main panel and country count down. I entered an enormous room with the music blasting and everyone dancing, on chairs and in the isles, having a great time. The chant was used to coral the room into paying attention to the chair. She started it (ICY, ICY, ICY) and was answered by everybody (PAA, PAA, PAA). It was deafening. The countdown starts, 3175 people from over 20 countries, farthest being Australia and Japan, came to celebrate recovery. A beautiful, organized chaos filled the room. Flags and costumes, people cheering and running back and forth as their country or State was called. The air in the room was full of acceptance, fun, and hope.

Chanting along to certain passages in the readings keeps the energy going and engaged during the beginning of the meeting. Until the speaker starts, then silence, more pointedly noticeable in contrast as the sea of people listen in rapt attention and respect. The speaker was excellent of course but what I took away from my first experience with ICYPAA was, to quote the Big Book, “we are not a glum lot”.

OUR PICK STRUCK GOLD IN NASHVILLE, TN
BY POMONA O.

In 1958, a meeting at Niagara Falls, NY, of young AA’s from across the U.S. and Canada started what is now the International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (ICYPAA), and it has met on an annual basis ever since. At the 1960 AA Convention, Bill W. noted that the age of new members was much lower than when he and Dr. Bob founded AA 25 years earlier. In a letter to ICYPAA dated June 15, 1969, Bill wrote "... in recent years I have found nothing for greater inspiration than the knowledge that A.A. of tomorrow will be safe, and certainly magnificent, in the keeping of you who are the younger generation of A.A. today.”
GRACE
BY NAS

I first checked out Alcoholics Anonymous when I was 21 years old, and frightened to death after a very sad episode of drinking and blacking out. The meeting I went to had a lot of old people and someone actually pinched my cheek because I was so “young and fresh.” Next time, 13 years later, no one pinched my cheek so I went in and out, and in and out for months.

On a summer Friday before a long weekend, I woke up with one of the worst hangovers I had ever had. After expressing my nausea in the toilet, I showered, put on clean clothes and walked to the streetcar, trying to ignore the sour smell of scotch oozing out of my pores. The streetcar I took regularly passed a park with drunkards passed out on benches and bag ladies meandering around checking out the garbage. “That’s where you’ll end up one day” my inner voice told me each morning as I watched, unable to turn away.

At work, I struggled through the day, trying to hide my shaking hands and speak as little as possible, unable to tie my tongue around words. At lunch time I didn’t eat or drink, but sat and shook. Everyone left the office quite early because most were going away for the long weekend. I eventually dragged myself up the deserted street feeling terribly sorry for myself. For some unknown reason, I did not go to the liquor store for my usual weekend supply of booze. I ended up at my club where I was deserted because everyone had gone away for the long weekend, and they all had someone to go with, unlike poor me. I tried unsuccessfully to swim; then ended up in a corner of the locker room in a bathrobe hugging my lonesome self desperately. I sat for quite a long time and then suddenly, at 7:30 p.m. I jumped up, dressed, ran to the subway and rode up to a meeting I had been to a few times before that I did not care for.

This time the meeting had changed: it actually looked welcoming, the books I had refused to buy before looked interesting, as did all the people I talked with, so I went for coffee with them, which I had refused to do before. When I went home that night, I was sure there was a presence in the room with me!

Ridiculous you say! I agree! I would have said the same thing about this story had I not sobered up. But I think I had emotionally hit bottom and was ready for grace. Grace is defined in the dictionary as an unearned gift. I certainly did not do anything to make me change my actions—if it had been left to me, I’d still be drunk or dead. But the gift of grace gave me the willingness to go to meetings and do what was suggested, which enabled me to stay sober for lo’ these many years. Give grace a chance to work in your life—go to a meeting, and another meeting, and another one—you never know when grace might strike and sober you up!
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

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<td>Oct 1</td>
<td><a href="http://aamadawaskavalley.org">http://aamadawaskavalley.org</a></td>
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<td>Combermere, ON (1095 Farmer Road)</td>
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<td>Jerry C. 1 (613) 332-0539</td>
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<td>38th Toronto Gratitude Roundup (LGBTQ)</td>
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<td>Area 83 Fall General Assembly</td>
<td>Oct 28 - 30</td>
<td><a href="http://area83aa.org">http://area83aa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kingston, ON (Ambassador Hotel - 1550 Princess Street)</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:area@area83aa.org">area@area83aa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornwall District 50 Conference</td>
<td>Nov 11 - 12</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cornwallaaconference@yahoo.com">cornwallaaconference@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramada Inn Conference Centre (805 Brookdale Avenue)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Tickets in Ottawa) John W.  (613) 746-7156</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belleville and Area Roundup</td>
<td>Nov 19</td>
<td><a href="https://www.quinteeastaa.org">https://www.quinteeastaa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Belleville, ON (516 Harmony Rd, Corbyville)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alkathon (Christmas and New Year)</td>
<td>Dec 24 - 25</td>
<td><a href="http://alkathon.ottawaaa.org">http://alkathon.ottawaaa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ottawa, ON (Bronson Centre)</td>
<td>Dec 31 - Jan 1</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alkathon@ottawaaa.org">alkathon@ottawaaa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2017 Ontario Regional Conference</td>
<td>Mar 10-12</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aaorc.ca">http://www.aaorc.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toronto, ON (Royal York Hotel)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017 Ottawa Spring Conference</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td><a href="http://spring.ottawaaa.org">http://spring.ottawaaa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ottawa, ON (St. Anthony’s Hall)</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:spring@ottawaaa.org">spring@ottawaaa.org</a></td>
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If you have an AA event that should be listed here and on the website, please email info@ottawaaa.org

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The 25-millionth copy of the Big Book was presented to Jill Brown, warden of San Quentin Prison, in July 2005, at the A.A. International Convention in Toronto. The gift of the book was A.A.’s way of expressing gratitude for that institution’s long history of supporting A.A as a resource for alcoholic inmates. The first A.A. meeting in a prison was held in San Quentin in 1941 under Warden Clinton T. Duffy. Since that time, hundreds of A.A. groups have sprung up behind prison walls. Some have started with the help of A.A. members on the outside, and all with the vital support and cooperation of corrections personnel.
“A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

“Each A.A. Group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large Metropolitan area their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary. The Trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation are, in effect, our A.A. General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. Tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain our A.A. General Service Office in New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, "The A.A. Grapevine." All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.”

Tradition Nine, Long Form

The least possible organization, that's our universal ideal. No fees, no dues, no rules imposed on anybody, one alcoholic bringing recovery to the next; that's the substance of what we most desire, isn't it?

But how shall this simple ideal best be realized? Often a question, that.

We have, for example, the kind of A.A. who is for simplicity. Terrified of anything organized, he tells us that A.A. is getting too complicated. He thinks money only makes trouble, committees only make dissension, elections only make politics, paid workers only make professionals and that clubs only coddle slips. Says he, let's get back to coffee and cakes by cozy firesides. If any alcoholics stray our way, let's look after them. But that's enough. Simplicity is our answer.

Quite opposed to such halcyon simplicity is the A.A. promoter. Left to himself he would "bang the cannon and twang the lyre" at every crossroad of the world. Millions for drunks, great A.A. hospitals, batteries of paid organizers and publicity experts wielding all the latest paraphernalia of sound and script; such would be our promoters dream. "Yes sir," he would bark "My two year plan calls for one million A.A. members by 1950!"

For one, I'm glad we have both conservatives and enthusiasts. They teach us much. The conservative will surely see to it that the A.A. movement never gets over organized. But the promoter will continue to remind us of our terrific obligation to the newcomer and to those hundreds of thousands of alcoholics still waiting all over the world to hear of A.A.

We shall, naturally, take the firm and safe middle course. A.A. has always violently resisted the idea of any general organization. Yet, paradoxically, we have ever stoutly insisted upon organizing certain special services; mostly those absolutely necessary to effective and plentiful 12th Step work.

If, for instance, an A.A. group elects a secretary or rotating committee, if an area forms an intergroup committee, if we set up a Foundation, a General Office or a Grapevine, then we are organized for service. The A.A. book and pamphlets, our meeting places and clubs, our dinners and regional assemblies —these are services too. Nor can we secure good hospital connections, properly sponsor new prospects and obtain good public relations just by chance. People have to be appointed to look after these things, sometimes paid people. Special services are performed.

But by none of these special services, has our spiritual or social activity, the great current of A.A. ever been really organized or professionalized. Yet our recovery program has been enormously aided. While important, these service activities, are very small by contrast with our main effort.

As such facts and distinctions become clear, we shall easily lay aside our fears of blighting organization or hazardous wealth. As a movement, we shall remain comfortably poor; for our service expenses are trifling.

With such assurances, we shall without doubt, continue to improve and extend our vital lifelines of special service; to better carry out our A.A. message to others; to make for ourselves a finer greater society, and, God willing, to assure Alcoholics Anonymous a long life and perfect unity.

© The A.A. Grapevine, August, 1948
1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?
2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the AA program—even if no one makes me do so—with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
6. Why doesn’t every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion. Reprinted with permission.
Does your group have anniversaries or medallions that you would like included in our newsletter? Please forward First Name, Last Initial, Date of Celebration and Homegroup to newsletter@ottawaaa.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBER</th>
<th>YRS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>MEMBER</th>
<th>YRS</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Jun 29</td>
<td>Beginners Group</td>
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<td>Awakening Group</td>
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<td>Jul 21</td>
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<td>Greg L</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Sep 11</td>
<td>Steps to Freedom</td>
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<td>Kim S</td>
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<td>Beginners Group</td>
<td>Melissa S</td>
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<td>Freedom</td>
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<td>Dino S</td>
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<td>Aug 1</td>
<td>Parkwood Hills</td>
<td>Kevin M</td>
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<td>Sep 20</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rick B</td>
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<td>Aug 2</td>
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<td>Heather H-C</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Aug 24</td>
<td>Share and Care</td>
<td>Jeff L</td>
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<td>H.O.P.E. Group</td>
<td>Aline P R</td>
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<td>Sep 23</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Aug 27</td>
<td>Westboro Big Book Study</td>
<td>Gene M</td>
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<td>Sep 27</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jason M</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sep 2</td>
<td>First AAvenue to Recovery</td>
<td>Jean H</td>
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<td>Sep 30</td>
<td>Lunch with Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle T</td>
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<td>Westboro Big Book Study</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Carrie M</td>
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<td>Westboro Big Book Study</td>
<td>John</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payton K</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sep 11</td>
<td>Awakening Group</td>
<td>Colleen</td>
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<td>Oct 3</td>
<td>Lunch with Bill</td>
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258 YEARS OF SOBRIETY IN THIS EDITON!

OH ANDY CI! DON'T YOU KNOW? IN AA, THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN!
RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE! IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT. KEEP COMING BACK!
A MIRACLE OF HEALING
65TH ANNUAL EASTERN ONTARIO FALL CONFERENCE
An Alcoholics Anonymous Event with Al-Anon Participation

October 21-23, 2016 | Hellenic Centre
1315 Prince of Wales Drive, Ottawa, ON K2C 1N2

The 2016 Fall Conference will feature three keynote speakers from Austin, Texas — Cecil R., Marti R. and Erik B. There will also be six panel discussions, meditation, a banquet, sobriety countdown and a dance.

The full schedule will be released in September at http://fall.ottawaaa.org and in Our Primary Purpose Newsletter.

REGISTRATION

Registration with banquet is $65.00, and can be made by cheque using the form in Our Primary Purpose Newsletter or by downloading it online at http://fall.ottawaaa.org. Payment by credit card is also available online. For cash options, please contact fall@ottawaaa.org. Banquet tickets cannot be purchased at the conference.

Registration without banquet is $15.00 in advance or at the door. Tickets available from committee members, or your group’s Intergroup or General Service Representative.

GROUP DONATIONS

We are grateful for any financial contributions towards the cost of our event. Group donations may be given to Fall Conference Committee members or a cheque to “Ottawa Area Intergroup - Fall Conference” mailed to:

Ottawa Area Intergroup - Fall Conference
P.O. Box 11112 Ottawa H
Nepean, Ontario K2H 7T8

Your group may also help us carry the message by purchasing a block of $15 advance tickets to distribute to newcomers and members in need at your meeting(s).

VOLUNTEERS

If you would like to volunteer for setup, teardown, registration, as a greeter or in the hospitality suite, please email us at fall@ottawaaa.org. Please include your name, sobriety date, availability, and area of interest.

HOSPITALITY SUITE DONATIONS

The hospitality suite will be open on Saturday, serving cold sweets and beverages. While supplies last. Food donations are appreciated, and may be dropped off on Saturday beginning at 8:00 am.

ACCOMMODATIONS

To make a hotel reservation, please contact the Best Western Ottawa City Centre at 613.728-1951, toll free at 1.800.268.5531 or online at http://book.bestwestern.com.

HELP MAKE OUR EVENT A SUCCESS!
PLEASE ANNOUNCE AT MEETINGS!
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Doors open on Friday at 6:00 pm. For general information regarding registration, accommodation, schedule, and to volunteer, visit http://fall.ottawaaa.org, or contact Kristin C. at fall@ottawaaa.org or 613.606.4104.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS
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$15.00 ADVANCE ADMISSION TICKETS
$15.00 advance admission tickets include access to all events, with the exception of the banquet (see below). Tickets available from Committee members and your local Intergroup or General Service Representative. Admission is $15.00 at the door. Tickets are cash only.

$65.00 REGISTRATION W/ BANQUET
$65.00 includes registration, banquet, and access to all events.

Online Credit Card Payments
To pay by credit card securely via Stripe online, please visit http://fall.ottawaaa.org. Do not use this form.

Cheque Payments
Payment by cheque only with this form. Mail completed forms with cheque(s) to:
Ottawa Area Intergroup - Fall Conference  P.O. Box 11112 Ottawa H Nepean, Ontario K2H 7T8

Form may also be submitted in person to Fall Conference committee members (Do not drop off at Intergroup). Registrations via mail must be postmarked by latest October 10, 2016. For other arrangements, including cash payment, please email fall@ottawaaa.org.

Make cheques payable to:
Ottawa Area Intergroup - Fall Conference

Contact Name
Email Address
Phone Number

Delegate Full Name (Badges only first name, last initial) Phone Number Affiliation (AA/Al-Anon, Homegroup, City) Special*

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10 places per table. You may reserve up to one table per form. Collect badges at registration desk upon arrival.

* Indicate vegetarian meal or other dietary / accessibility requirements

$65.00 (incl. tax) x □ ( # of delegates) = $ □

HELP OTHERS ATTEND OUR EVENT
Your donation will go towards purchasing registration tickets for those new or in need in our fellowship. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Donation = $ □