

BETTER TIMES

Produced for A.A. members, by A.A. members in the GTA



BIG BOOK! EDITION!

**Alcoholics
Anonymous**



MARCH 2022



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MEDALLIONS



NAME	YEARS DRY	DATE	GROUP	CELEBRATION
Bob S.	15	Mar 5, 2007	Erin Mills Group	Mar 21, 2022

DID YOU KNOW?

On April 4th 1939 the first edition of the Big Book was published with 4730 copies at \$3.50 a copy. In order to convince the alcoholic he was getting his money's worth it was printed on thick paper with wide margins and due to this was large and bulky and became known as the "Big Book."

Alcoholics Anonymous
Area 83 Eastern Ontario International

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

[Better Times Volunteers](#) *we need writers!*

[Phone Greeters](#)

[12 Step Committee Members](#)

[Bilingual Member Resource](#)

[IT Sub-Committee Members](#)

[Self-Support Chair](#)



MEETING CHANGES

This pandemic has brought about incredible changes and quickly; please don't forget that our website and meeting list updates are dependant on you letting us know [here](https://www.aatoronto.org/update-or-change-a-meeting/): <https://www.aatoronto.org/update-or-change-a-meeting/>



Opinions expressed in *BETTER TIMES* are those of the authors and don't necessarily reflect those of the [GTA A.A. Intergroup](#). The Editor reserves the right to edit for length, content and grammar in accordance with layout and quality purposes. Submit group news, medallions, other event notices to: communications@aatoronto.org Letters or articles to the Editor (200-500 words) for *BETTER TIMES* at bettertimes@aatoronto.org

DEFECTS OF CHARACTER

Today I was reading in the [Big Book](#) stories of the Pioneers in [A.A.](#) I had been listening to one of my favourite podcasts and the speaker drew my attention to page 263 4th Edition of the Big Book, and in particular an alcoholic's visit with Dr. Bob S. the co-founder of [Alcoholics Anonymous](#).

Dr. Bob took him in the office and together they reviewed the then Six Steps of the Program (the Big Book had not yet been written) and Dr. Bob was relating to the new man what had worked for him and the then members of what was to become known as Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Original Six Steps were:

- Complete Deflation
- Dependence on Guidance from a Higher Power
- Moral Inventory
- Confession
- Restitution
- Continued Work with Others

Bill W. had yet to expand the original 6 Steps to the [12 Steps](#) as we know them today. Of interest to this writer is that immediately upon the review of the steps, which took two to three hours, the then [Fifth Step](#) (Confession) was undertaken with Dr. Bob pointing out the defects of character of the new man. These were selfishness, conceit, jealousy, carelessness, intolerance, ill-temperament, sarcasm and resentment.

One may wonder at Dr. Bob pointing out the defects of another. Upon reflection of this point I have arrived at the conclusion that as a new person I had no idea that I possessed these traits—in truth I had no idea of why I drank—and it was revealed to me I possessed everyone of them. As my sponsor told me “the sooner

I got to work on these defects, the better I would feel.” He was right!

As it has been pointed out, we often do not wish to recognize these traits within ourselves and may tend to gloss over them in taking an “easier softer approach.”

Finding and identifying our defects and shortcoming is essential to achieving lasting sobriety, contentment, and peace of mind.

The need to move through the steps with a sponsor is apparent and paramount to recovery from alcoholism. Delay only causes further pain and the potential to return to drinking.

It is also important that the sponsor assist the new person in pointing out their defects and shortcomings so that they may become aware of them and begin to change, for without change we shall remain the same as always. —**Tom McN** [Keep it Simple](#)

A WAY OUT

I have never been very good at doing what books told me to do. The Bible, textbooks, rule books. My first sponsor did not do things “by the book” either. As much as he believed in the [Big Book](#) and what it contained he also believed it was a set of instructions written so simply that anyone could follow them and a starting point for shared experience. Each page I turned with my sponsor prompted questions from me and the relaying of experience by him. When I had trouble with [Step Two](#) he suggested I read Williams James *Varieties of Religious Experience* and go sit on a rock by the river and pray to the sky. When I stumbled over [Step Three](#) and the word “God” he asked me to focus on willingness rather than belief. The Big Book in reality is the experience of the first 100 members who found through the steps and conscious contact with their higher power “a way out.” It is not a book to tell us what to do. It is a book to show us what others have done before us. —

Darren G [Last Stop Freedom](#)

ROCKETED

into a 4th Dimension

AA PROGRAM

FRIDAY MARCH 18, 2022

7:00 pm Billy N. Palm Beach Gardens, FL

SATURDAY MARCH 19, 2022

9:00 am	Pushan V.	Mumbai, India.
11:00 am	Trish LaN.	Vancouver (Class B Trustee)
	Nancy McCarthy	Missouri (Class A Trustee)
1:30 am	Family Panel	Scott C. (AA) Meredith C. (Al-Anon)
		Wyatt C. (Al-Ateen) Los Angeles, California
3:30 pm	Ash S.	Austin TX.
5:00 pm	Paul McQ.	Rockaway Beach, NY.
7:30 pm	CeCe G.	Atlanta, GA.

SUNDAY MARCH 20, 2022

11:00 am	Brian D.	Harrisburg, PA.
1:00 pm	Gratitude Countdown	
1:15 pm	Don C.,	Colorado Springs, CO.
	Closing	

AL-ANON PROGRAM

FRIDAY MARCH 18, 2022

6:30 pm	Wally C.	Nova Scotia (Delegate)
	Barb M.	Nova Scotia
8:00 pm	Anne K.	Saskatchewan

SATURDAY MARCH 19, 2022

9:00 am	Thérèse L. S.	Quebec (Trustee)
10:30 am	Jazlyn W-L	Ontario (Alateen Speaker)
12:30 pm	Amy C.	Ontario
2:00 pm	Barb E.	British Columbia
	Owen H	British Columbia (Delegate)
4:00 pm	Carol H.	Manitoba
6:00 pm	Sandra & Greg J.	Newfoundland and Labrador

SUNDAY MARCH 20, 2022

9:00 am	Carole D.	New Brunswick
10:30 am	Lorraine F.	Alberta (Trustee)
12:00 pm	Cheryl B.	Prince Edward Island
	Jordan B.	Prince Edward Island
	Reta K.	Prince Edward Island

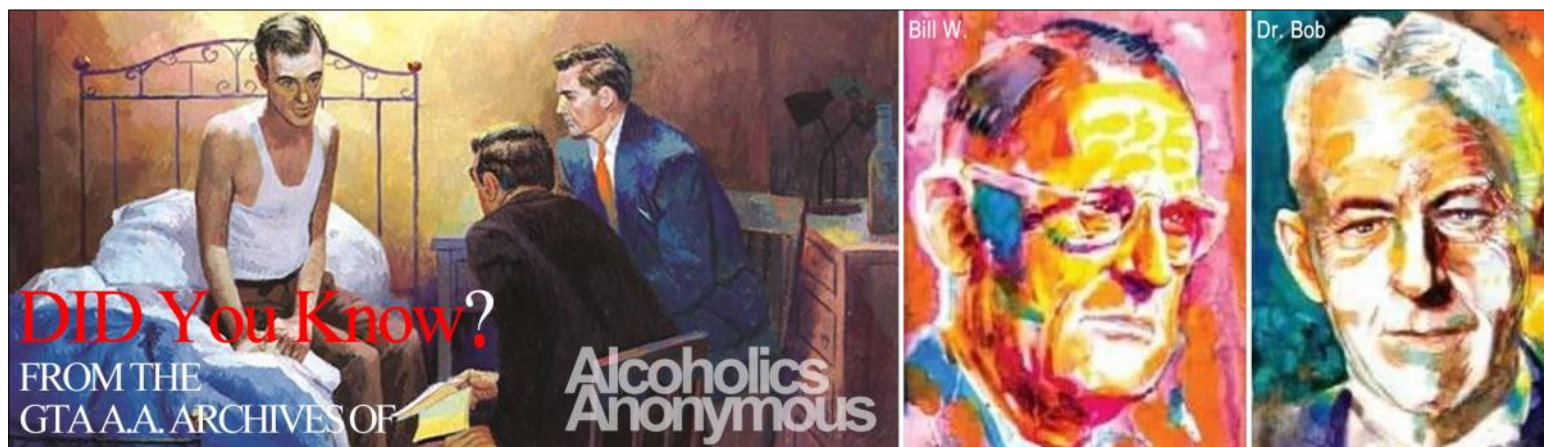
Ontario Regional Conference

March 18 - 20 2022

zoom: tbc pw: tbc

Phone Greeters Needed 24/7
Please Sign Up for a shift

Contact: 12step@aatoronto.org Visit: aatoronto.org Call: 416-487-5591



- In April 1938 the writing of the [Big Book](#) began at the business office of Hank P. at Honor's Dealer, 17 Williams St., Newark, NJ.
- The 1st Edition Big Book "circus color" dust jacket was designed by Ray C. whose story "An Artist's Concept" was in the 1st edition.
- In the 1st edition of the Big Book the "Doctor's Opinion" started on page 1 and the basic text ended at page 174.
- Hank P., who sobered up in the winter of '35 in New York, wrote the story "The Unbeliever" contained in the 1st edition of the Big Book.
- Ruth Hock, the first [A.A.](#) secretary, wrote "If it wasn't for Hank P. the Big Book would never have been published."
- The 1st edition of the Big Book contained 29 stories—10 from the east coast, 18 from the mid-west and 1 from the west coast.
- Florence R., NY, got sober Sept. 13, 1937, and was the first female member. Her story "Feminine Victory" was in the 1st edition of the Big Book.
- In March 1941 the 1st edition, 2nd printing of the Big Book was produced and Appendix II titled "Spiritual Experience" was added.
- In July 1955 the 2nd edition of the Big Book was published.
- In the 2nd edition Dr. Silkworth's name was added to the "Doctor's Opinion."
- In the 2nd edition the personal stories were organized into 3 sections: "Pioneers of A.A.", "They Stopped in Time" & "They Lost Nearly All."
- In the 2nd edition 30 new stories were introduced.
- In March 1976 the 3rd edition of the Big Book was published. The number of personal stories was increased to 43 by adding 13 new stories.
- In November 2001 the 4th edition Big Book was published with 24 new stories and 17 retained from the 3rd Edition.
- In August 1942 the A.A. Office in NY granted distribution rights for the Big Book to Rev. George Little, Toronto, Ontario.
- In 1981 Prime Minister of Canada Pierre Trudeau declined to accept the 3 millionth copy of the Big Book.

OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE NEEDED FOR THE GTA ARCHIVES

TO DONATE AA/GTA ARCHIVAL ITEMS TO THE GTA ARCHIVES PLEASE CONTACT
THE GTA ARCHIVIST EDDY G. at 416-536-7536.

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

When I was first introduced to what is affectionately known as the "[Big Book](#)", the person who had one was a man I met in jail. He was willing to read it with some of us, but never wanted to lend it out, or to give it away, and I rarely saw him without it. It took some time for me to get my hands on a copy, and when I did, I began to read it. I spent a few months in jail, and when I left, I took my copy of the book with me and began my road to recovery.

The Book of [Alcoholics Anonymous](#) has been for me a roadmap to freedom. It has also been for me a roadmap to God and to the power that brings alcoholics back from the gates of death and despair. I recall asking somebody in my early days of recovery how this *thing* works. The old timer said to me that what this program gives us is freedom from the hell that we had been living. When I first came to [A.A.](#) I believed that the alcohol was my problem; what I have since come to understand is that while alcohol acted as my solution to the unbearable feelings I had inside, my alcoholism separated me from myself, from my friends, my mother, my children and ultimately from God.

As a result of my alcoholism, and the bedevillments that I experienced, I was broken and filled with enough desperation to take direction and to follow the program of recovery that has resulted in my recovery from alcoholism. As promised in our book, the obsession to drink was removed, and I was able to begin to develop and strengthen my relationship with God. I did not come into Alcoholics Anonymous as an atheist, or an agnostic: I always believed in God. However I never felt I had a relationship with God, and when I heard people say that they trusted God, I had difficulty relating with that. This program as out-



The Big Book

Researching Issues, Possible Tools and Access

Presented at the 70th Annual General Service Conference 2020
Click [here](#) for the presentation

DID YOU KNOW?

The first edition of the Big Book was to be called "The Way Out." There turned out to be 12 books by that name registered at the Library of Congress so it was named "Alcoholics Anonymous" instead.

lined in the book connects me to the power that results in recovery from alcoholism. As a result of taking, and working, these steps I have experienced and continue to experience the promises that are outlined in the Big Book. I have experienced the joy of living, of helping others, and accepting that life does not always go as I anticipated. As a result of following the clear-cut directions, my belief turned to faith and my faith into trust. Today I can absolutely say in all earnestness that I trust God and this program

completely. This is as a result of taking the steps outlined in the book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I understand now why that book was so important to that man I met so many years ago, and why he cherished it. I have come to develop the same love for this book as I saw in him. —**Andrew M** [Last Stop Freedom](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Since the Big Book was first published in 1939 over 30 million copies have been sold ranking it high on the list of the best-selling books of all-time. In 2011, *Time* magazine placed the book on its list of the 100 best and most influential books of the 20th century and the Library of Congress has designated it as one of 88 books that shaped America.

GROUPS BEGUN IN MARCH:

March 1978 - [Saturday Morning Discussion Group](#)
March 1981 - [Aurora Group](#)
March 5, 2019 - [Queen Street Secular Afternoon Group](#)
March 6, 1987 - [Lighthouse Group](#)
March 7, 1971 - [Trial & Error Group](#)
March 8, 1971 - [King City Group](#)
March 11, 1968 - [Shepherd Group](#)
March 12, 2019 - [We are Diversity Group](#)
March 15, 1970 - [Bayview Group](#)
March 17, 1949 - [Sunnyside Group](#)
March 17, 1960 - [Port Credit Group](#)
March 17, 1970 - [Golden Mile Group](#)
March 17, 1981 - [St. Patrick's Group](#)
March 17, 1984 - [Saint Andrew's Meeting](#)
March 29, 1984 - [Recovery Group- Thornhill](#)
March 30, 1958 - [Ajax Group](#)





THE BIG BOOK

OF
ALCOHOLICS
ANONYMOUS

B	F	G	I	W	A	W	J	O	T	L	B	Z	W	E	Q	S	X	O	A	Wilson
Z	Y	T	L	J	M	D	D	J	I	L	F	M	H	S	U	H	J	V	U	Smith
Q	Y	M	G	O	Y	Y	L	O	F	D	I	E	B	T	N	V	I	A	Q	Alcoholics
Q	X	D	P	J	K	Q	A	P	P	E	N	D	I	X	F	I	A	F	N	Anonymous
W	F	T	O	M	Z	D	I	M	E	N	S	I	O	N	V	Y	D	B	B	Solution
Z	L	A	W	S	N	W	R	V	N	X	Z	T	B	H	L	V	W	L	P	Steps
E	C	N	E	I	R	E	P	X	E	C	Z	A	P	P	T	A	G	D	S	Traditions
L	R	D	R	X	J	M	H	V	F	K	S	T	W	R	G	R	B	F	Z	Meditation
R	S	O	L	U	T	I	O	N	E	I	S	I	V	P	E	R	U	O	H	Silkworth
X	E	B	E	S	T	E	P	S	C	R	G	O	Y	K	U	F	D	O	E	Twelve
O	I	E	S	J	T	V	O	T	I	J	D	N	V	W	D	R	A	A	F	Basic
A	R	L	S	R	N	J	W	W	B	I	M	U	X	S	O	V	L	C	E	Text
I	O	I	V	W	Q	D	Z	M	A	G	S	I	U	F	N	C	C	M	E	Fourth
Q	T	E	C	J	I	K	H	C	N	N	E	T	X	S	O	Z	L	T	R	Dimension
I	S	V	Q	M	I	L	C	K	O	O	V	O	R	H	A	D	B	X	S	Stories
W	A	E	F	P	U	E	S	I	M	H	F	H	O	F	G	Q	G	R	Q	Acceptance
N	I	O	B	L	P	A	T	O	K	D	I	L	W	Q	N	C	Q	S	J	Willingness
R	O	W	R	T	A	I	L	M	N	F	I	H	I	G	O	S	H	F	Z	Oxford
E	U	I	A	S	D	U	T	F	H	C	S	C	L	A	S	S	X	X	N	Preface
H	X	N	N	A	A	X	T	A	S	K	R	M	L	D	T	R	N	Q	E	Doctors
B	C	R	R	I	E	H	P	I	Q	G	C	B	I	L	I	S	N	A	J	Opinion
E	Y	T	X	T	P	X	S	D	R	U	W	C	N	T	C	W	X	O	M	Spiritual
Y	S	R	O	T	C	O	D	Y	T	I	C	D	G	M	H	I	Z	A	O	Malady
G	H	B	X	Q	Q	J	S	F	P	C	P	L	N	G	R	B	L	C	Y	Experience
L	Z	A	N	O	N	Y	M	O	U	S	H	S	E	A	K	A	C	A	R	Appendix
I	V	Y	L	R	Q	B	Z	Z	H	W	I	L	S	X	D	T	W	U	D	Agnostic
Q	K	I	F	B	H	T	R	O	W	K	L	I	S	Y	O	N	I	Y	G	Believe
R	W	B	H	Q	U	X	A	Q	G	A	H	G	T	W	E	L	V	E	W	Powerless

DID YOU KNOW?

The Herbert Spencer “contempt prior to investigation” quote first appeared in the story “An Artist’s Concept” in the 1st edition of the Big Book. It was permanently added at the end of Appendix II in the 2nd edition printed in July 1955.

THE LIGHTS GO ON

When I came into recovery I was ready. I had been beaten into a "state of reasonableness" by my alcoholism. I came in from 27 years of actively drinking. My life was a shambles. I was 45-years-old, had been on street corners, had 41 convictions, kids in and out of the system, hepatitis C, no friends, no purpose, no self-esteem, no self-respect. I operated on one emotion: desperation.

By the time I got to this point I had already been trying to stop for the past 10 years. It stopped being fun several prison sentences and emergency room visits ago. There's nothing more terrifying than wanting to stop but finding myself completely unable to do so.

I tried all the traditional solutions. I did treatment centers, day programs, counseling, psychiatry, psychology. Nothing worked. In despair and under the direction of one of my old prison friends who was in recovery I finally ended up falling into a meeting. Although I can barely remember what took place there, I do remember someone who took a 30-day chip who became my instant hero. Someone else talked about this thing being a disease. This was something I had never heard before. After this 10-year 'dreary desert of futility' I was finally given a little hope.

I kept returning to this meeting and pretty soon I started collecting chips. There was a lot of social interaction at this group, and I morphed into a bit of a social butterfly after all those years of being a loner. What I didn't under-

stand was that I wasn't getting better. In fact I was getting worse. All the shame, guilt, fear, resentment, low self-esteem was still festering deep within. But now I didn't have any solution; no booze, no peace, no serenity, no higher power. By the time I came up to 2 years dry

from drugs and alcohol, I had become a complete basket case. I came to the conclusion that if this was sobriety I didn't want it anymore. I couldn't see myself living the rest of my life in such internal darkness. I decided to try one last meeting.

Did You Know?

Dr. Bob's wife Anne was asked to write the chapter of the Big Book "portraying the wife of an alcoholic" but she declined. Bill W. ended up writing the chapter "To Wives" himself.

It was Tuesday evening when I walked into this meeting. It was a smaller group of people and there was something in the air, a sort of inexplicable joy. They all took turns reading out of that dratted blue book that I had never paid any attention to, and they all shared their experiences on what resonated with them from the reading. They seemed happy and it was attractive. They welcomed me warmly. I remember going back to this group and trying to share after a reading like they did though without a solution. After one of my self-pity monologues I was approached by one of the members of this group. He flat out told me that I needed to do some work. He offered to take me through the [Big Book](#). Although I didn't really want to, and I thought I knew better than he, I accepted his offer. What did I have to lose?

What happened over the course of those few months was, like the book says, a wholesale miracle. I began to get free from the bondage of myself. I learned about how my selfishness and self-centeredness blocked me from happiness. I began to stop lying to myself and to accept my imperfections and defects of character, and to try to rise above them with the help of a higher power.

I made amends and each time a little more darkness was removed from my heart. I began to apply steps 10 and 11 and 12 to my life and have been brought in to a truly amazing and peaceful way of life. I now love our book, and I love sharing it with others. I love seeing the lights go on in other people's eyes just like they did in mine. —**Kim C A.A. member-at-large**



Check out the 2022 Pre-conference Agenda Sharing [Dashboard](#) and your [Invitation](#) to participate

(Sharing Sessions will be held March 20–April 11, 2022)