

BETTER TIMES

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



TRADITION



ELEVEN

Our public relations policy is based on **ATTRACTION** rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

Alcoholics Anonymous

A.A. TORONTO
(416) 487-5591

November 2021



GREATER TORONTO AREA INTERGROUP

202-234 Eglinton Avenue East
Toronto, ON M4P 1K5
416-487-5591

www.aatoronto.org

MEDALLIONS



NAME	YEARS	DRY DATE	GROUP	CELEBRATION
Scott B	1	Oct 26, 2020	Erin Mills	Nov 1st
Isaac J	1	May 11, 2020	Glenholme	Nov 3rd

SERVICE COMMITTEES

ACCESSIBILITY

accessibility@aatoronto.org

ARCHIVES

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David R. Assistant Editor
Darren G. Editor

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CLICK ON THE PICS TO GO TO:



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

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

[Phone Greeters](#)

[Bilingual Member Resource](#)

[2022 Virtual ORC Chair](#)

[IT Sub-Committee Members](#)

[Self-Support Chair](#)

[Finance Committee Member](#)

[2021 Winter Season Open House In-Person](#)

[2021 Winter Season & New Years Virtual](#)

[Alkathon's Groups needed to chair meetings](#)



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/>)



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

Please consider volunteering an hour participation in this year's virtual alkathon's
One meeting slot per group and on a first come first serve basis

Please send an email to: winterseasonvirtualalkathon@aatoronto.org



WINTER SEASON VIRTUAL ALKATHON

December 24th noon to 3 am

December 25th 3 pm to midnight

NEW YEAR'S VIRTUAL ALKATHON

December 31st noon start

January 1st noon end



TWELFTH STEP PILOT PROJECT: Building the Newcomer Buddies List

Do you feel compelled to help newcomers with their 90 meetings in 90 days, getting them started on their sober journey in Alcoholics Anonymous? Providing your details helps phone greeters connect you with a newcomer according to your common details.

A phone greeter will share your details with a caller and you will begin by taking them to their first week of meetings in the format of your mutual preference. Your home group will expose them to the importance accountability and participation in a home group. Invite them to talk on the phone when struggling and more importantly, before they struggle, the importance of connecting with another alcoholic.

Stress the need to attend at least one meeting a day for 90 consecutive days—that's how long it takes our brains to rewire in the absence of alcohol. Introduce them if they are willing to your sponsees encouraging them to share and also Adding your sponsees to the mix helps everyone with service, fellowship and practicing our twelfth step of carrying the message.

Encourage them to take part in pre and post meeting fellowship, introducing them to other A.A. members. At in-person meetings, load them up with pamphlets and suggest they team up with other newcomers for camaraderie and accountability. Recommend they start reading the Big Book as soon as possible. Explain that the best way to get a sponsor is to attend lots of meetings with an ear to hearing someone they identify with. Moreover, most groups have several members who are willing to serve as temporary sponsors.

If this initiative interests you, please send an email to: 12step@aatoronto.org with the following info.:

Name (Pronouns optional), Age, Home Group, Phone #, Postal Code (allows geographical matching), Email and your availability (be specific).



Toronto Intergroup Presents

Winter Season Open House

Fellowship,
food, fun!

Open & Closed
AA and Al Anon
meetings!

Open and Closed AA Meetings 10:30, 1:00, 2:15
Open and Closed Alanon Meetings 11:45

Saturday, December 25, 2021 - 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM

College Street United Church

452 College Street, Toronto

Transit 511 Bathurst Streetcars (from Bathurst subway station)

506 College St. Streetcars (Queen's Park Subway station)

Paid parking on the south west corner of College and Bathurst



For more information go to www.aatoronto.org or email: wsoh@aatoronto.org
Contact Event Chair: Edward A. 647-333-6415

We are Self-Supporting

Together we will make the 77th Annual Winter Season Open House a success.

Use your talent as service to the AA fellowship

Arrange to contribute or cook a turkey or ham

Contribute baked sweets or desserts

Contact us: wsoh@aatoronto.org

Or volunteer time as part of the WSOH committee

Friday, December 24th, 2021 - 9:00 - 3:00 (set-up, kitchen food prep)

Saturday, December 25th, 2021 - 9:00 - 4:00 (greeters, meetings support, buffet servers,
clear tables, sanitation detail, clean-up and closing crew)

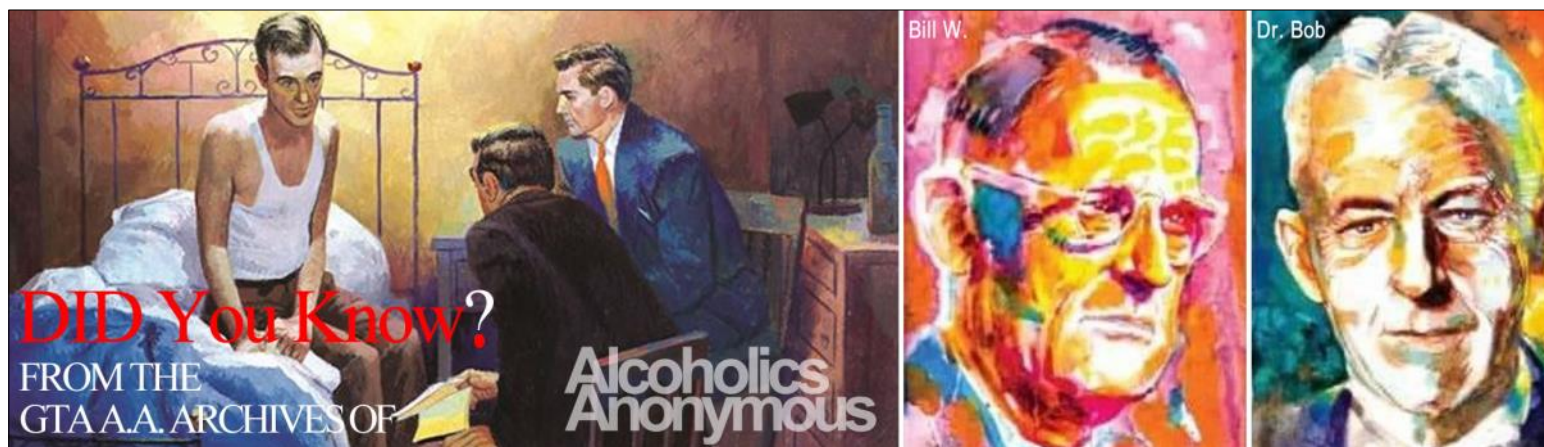
Contact Volunteer Coordinator

wsoh@aatoronto.org



Adherence to Ontario Covid 19
safety protocols will be in effect.





- November 1934, prior to Ebby T's visit, Bill went to Towns Hospital in July for the second time. Dr. Silkworth explained the obsession and allergy of alcoholism, but Bill started drinking again immediately upon discharge. Bill was unemployable, \$50,000 in debt, suicidal and drinking around the clock. In September, Bill entered Towns Hospital for the third time. Dr. Silkworth pronounced him as hopeless and told Lois that Bill would likely have to be committed. Bill left the hospital a very broken, frightened man. Sheer terror kept him sober (dry spell) until November 11, 1934, Armistice Day, Bill W. decided to play golf and wound up getting drunk and injured. Lois began investigating sanitariums in which to place Bill.
 - November 19, 1939, Bill W.'s money problems make him want to go back to work, but New York [A.A.'s](#) urge him to stay on as head of the movement.
- November 1940, Bill and Lois moved into a small apartment at the 24th St. Cubhouse for about a year.
- November 26, 1943, six [Toronto A.A. members](#) went to London Ontario and helped start London A.A. Club.
 - November 16, 1945, Billy Wilder and Charles Brackett made Charles R. Jackson's novel [The Lost Weekend](#) into a hard-hitting movie about alcoholism for Universal Pictures. It starred Ray Milland and Jane Wyman. It was a sensation and won four Oscars (best picture, director, screenplay and actor). It's realistic portrayal of alcoholism. It generated favourable publicity for A.A. The success of the multiple Oscar-winning movie led three Hollywood studios to offer A.A. up to \$100,000. [Calculating inflation](#), that would be the equivalent to \$1,523,944.44 today for rights to its story. The Alcoholic Foundation declined.
 - 1945, at the suggestion of Earl T. founder of A.A. in Chicago (his story *He Sold Himself Short* in the [Big Book](#), 2nd & 3rd edition). Bill codified the Traditions and wrote essays on them for [The Grapevine](#). Initially, the [Twelve Traditions](#) were called Twelve Points to Assure Our Future.
 - November 25, 1948, the first A.A group in Europe is established in Dublin, Ireland.
 - November 16, 1950, Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith (Dr. Bob) at the age of 70, co-founder of A.A., dies of cancer at City Hospital in Akron, Ohio. He was cremated in Cleveland and his remains were buried in Mount Peace Cemetery in Akron beside his wife Anne. His funeral service was conducted by the Reverend Walter Tunks whose answer to a phone call 15 years earlier brought Bill W. and Dr. Bob together. In his fifteen years of sobriety, Dr. Bob helped more than 5,000 alcoholics and never took any fee for his professional services. In his eulogy, Bill described Dr. Bob as "the prince of the Twelfth Steppers".
A [memorial issue of the Grapevine was issued for Dr. Bob in January 1951](#). It provides a rich narrative and photographic history of Dr. Bob.
 - November 1986, The [Big Book](#) is published in paperback.
 - November 22, 1990, GTA Intergroup divided the Institutions Committee into Corrections and Treatment.

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 EVOLUTION OF ANONYMITY

What does it take to save an alcoholic or addict? I do not know what has worked for other people, but a pandemic that forced the evolution of anonymity in [Alcoholics Anonymous](#) was the catalyst that saved me.

Back in November 2019, the calm before the COVID storm, I first walked into the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous. I continued my weekly A.A. meetings into 2020, and with no surprise to any fellow members, relapsed a few times. However, the saying "Keep coming back," kept me engaged. Then all the bells, buzz and whistles filled the media outlets on a new virus that started to spread throughout Asia and Europe. Every week after that, the reality of a global pandemic had arrived. Countries, cities and towns panicked and we were thrown into a lockdown for the first time in my life and the A.A. meetings stopped abruptly.

What do I do now? After three weeks of lockdown, I got a call from a fellow group member who asked me, "Would you be interested in online meetings through Zoom?" Without hesitation I said "Yes!" So, the following Monday, our group was online.

As the pandemic continued, most A.A. meetings were online and running smoothly. I attended daily meetings with different groups around the world and had full control of my anonymity. All I had to do was stop attending if I was embarrassed, hurt or didn't like something or someone. Another group or meeting was just a click away. Instead of protection by flight, I ended up gaining confidence in sharing my journey of sobriety.

During meetings people were sharing their powerlessness over their addiction. Sharing loss, struggles, fears and uncertainties. They shared their deepest thoughts and feelings, as if sitting on their coach, beside a trusted soul mate, seeking acceptance, acknowledgement, sympathy, empathy and comfort. And all A.A. groups did not fail or disappoint in their response. Come to think of it, people for the most part were literally sitting on their coaches and in their homes.

Then, you would have someone share for the first time. Stating that they were curious about A.A. and attended because they also had nothing to lose with their cameras and microphones off.

Listening, I was connecting to people's shares. Shares of experience, strength, struggles and hope. The result, they stopped drinking and wanted to thank the group for their success by being a little less anonymous by turning the camera on and extending their gratitude to the group. Online meetings freed me from distractions like: where do I find a meeting, how do I get to a meeting, what should I wear, someone might know me and so

on. Today, I can never be alone again because I can now go to a meeting 365 days a year, seven days a week and at any time. Day or night, rain or shine, a meeting is available. I know that I can't be the only one who found success during this awful world-changing pandemic, but a silver lining might lie in the evolution of anonymity in Alcoholics Anonymous.

-JLW, The Lone Wolf

PROMOTION = EGO, EXPOSURE, RISK

attraction = humility, serenity, peace

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

When I talk or write about any part of A.A., it seems to immediately draw on other aspects of [A.A.'s steps](#), [traditions](#), [principles](#), [concepts](#) and [promises](#).

In 1946, Bill W., A.A. co-founder, wrote:

"The word anonymous has for us an immense spiritual significance. Subtly but powerfully, it reminds us that we are always to place principles before personalities; that we have renounced personal glorification in public; that our movement not only preaches but actually practices a true humility."

In the beginning of my sober journey I collected my monthly chips like a marathon runner does a medal at the end of a hard run. I wanted to shout out to anyone that would listen or look at my colourful chips, look what I've done, look at how well I'm doing.

I was reminded that we all do this only 24 hours at a time and to pipe down and listen up. That was a hard pill to swallow but I listened and I learned about my ego and how it shows up in my thoughts and actions. Learning to practice some humility ensures anonymity not just for me but for my sober family and A.A. as a whole. Should I shout loudly from the rooftops about A.A. and my sober achievement(s), what then would happen should I stumble and fall? How then would those that applauded my egotistical proclamations look upon the program of Alcoholics Anonymous? This is the exact scenario and attention that is to be avoided by practicing some humility.

Attraction is not loud, in your face, boisterous or arrogant. Attraction is in the display, the doing and the living of our spiritual principles in such a way that others want it! They want what you have! This ensures the ongoing attraction of the still suffering alcoholic to the program and the members of Alcoholics Anonymous with the hope of recovery from a seemingly hopeless state of mind.

—Mary M, [Erin Mills Group](#)



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TRADITION 11 WORD SEARCH

11

S	M	G	E	M	W	H	R	E	R	G	W	L	V	D	K	X	W	M	A	Tradition
N	T	R	J	A	R	I	N	W	N	N	D	N	A	P	U	X	M	C	H	Group
B	V	E	T	D	N	T	K	E	V	D	T	N	C	N	G	L	B	H	Z	Eleven
H	C	C	H	B	R	E	V	A	U	N	B	K	M	H	O	Z	Q	P	E	Famous
P	Y	O	I	I	M	E	R	T	X	V	H	P	Q	B	J	S	G	I	U	Our
D	D	V	I	N	L	J	U	T	H	G	O	G	N	P	S	E	R	D	E	Public
V	N	E	M	E	M	B	E	R	S	L	G	T	U	O	Q	Y	D	E	L	Relations
G	J	R	C	Z	Z	T	L	A	I	X	H	A	N	C	I	X	W	N	P	Policy
R	H	Y	N	N	S	Z	J	C	E	D	R	J	T	A	A	V	H	T	Z	Based
J	D	K	I	S	Q	E	Y	T	A	L	C	O	H	O	L	I	C	I	J	Members
R	I	G	B	P	N	U	X	I	Z	Y	H	T	J	D	A	B	Q	F	G	Attraction
X	J	K	J	P	R	O	M	O	T	I	O	N	U	V	L	N	M	Y	S	Rather
K	O	W	R	L	L	R	G	N	A	U	F	X	X	V	A	Y	N	I	W	Promotion
X	Y	G	E	E	F	A	C	V	N	X	Y	H	Q	L	K	O	O	M	L	Always
I	P	D	W	V	X	T	B	X	F	D	W	P	O	N	I	B	I	X	G	Maintain
L	X	U	J	E	B	H	A	C	R	H	G	N	A	T	O	W	T	J	Z	Names
L	D	E	B	L	M	E	S	S	A	G	E	Y	C	N	U	Z	I	Y	L	Personal
O	E	E	K	L	Y	R	E	N	O	D	Y	E	W	H	R	V	D	O	S	Message
V	F	C	M	F	I	Q	D	T	A	B	T	K	S	N	S	B	A	R	M	Alcoholic
P	O	I	D	A	R	C	S	V	M	O	W	M	C	A	O	G	R	E	V	Anonymity
T	K	S	Y	A	W	L	A	K	R	B	A	N	R	J	W	Z	T	L	A	Level
S	U	Y	T	M	F	M	S	P	T	I	P	C	M	F	U	J	T	A	A	Recovery
E	S	H	D	B	U	A	T	K	N	C	A	N	O	N	Y	M	I	T	Y	Identify
M	F	E	F	Y	N	V	M	T	X	P	H	N	Y	V	F	G	M	I	L	Press
A	D	G	R	O	U	P	A	O	U	C	H	M	E	D	I	A	Q	O	V	Radio
N	D	S	A	P	T	I	T	G	U	O	J	H	E	A	L	A	K	N	R	Anonymous
G	R	A	N	O	N	Y	M	O	U	S	V	S	K	T	M	Y	R	S	J	Protection
C	Q	A	S	O	T	D	F	M	M	W	O	E	W	T	S	Q	H	L	C	Films
P	W	B	J	N	P	Q	P	N	S	Z	I	K	B	Q	X	H	L	K	U	

GROUPS BEGUN IN NOVEMBER:

- Nov. 1, 1968 - [Pathfinders Group](#)
 - Nov. 5, 1981 - [Keep It Simple Group](#)
 - Nov. 6, 1967 - [West Toronto Men's Meeting](#)
 - Nov. 6, 1973 - [Agincourt Acorn Group](#)
 - Nov. 6, 1999 - [St. Andrews Meeting](#)
 - Nov. 8, 1977 - [Scarborough General Hospital](#)
 - Nov. 11, 1969 - [Beverly Hills Group](#)
 - Nov. 17, 1947 - [Oakville Group](#)
 - Nov. 24, 1954 - [Unionville Group](#)
 - Nov. 25, 1956 - [East Toronto Men's Group](#)



24/7

THE HELPLINE PHONES ARE ANSWERED

WE NEED HELP !

Please consider signing up for a shift

CALL: 416-487-5591

CONTACT: 12step@aatoronto.org

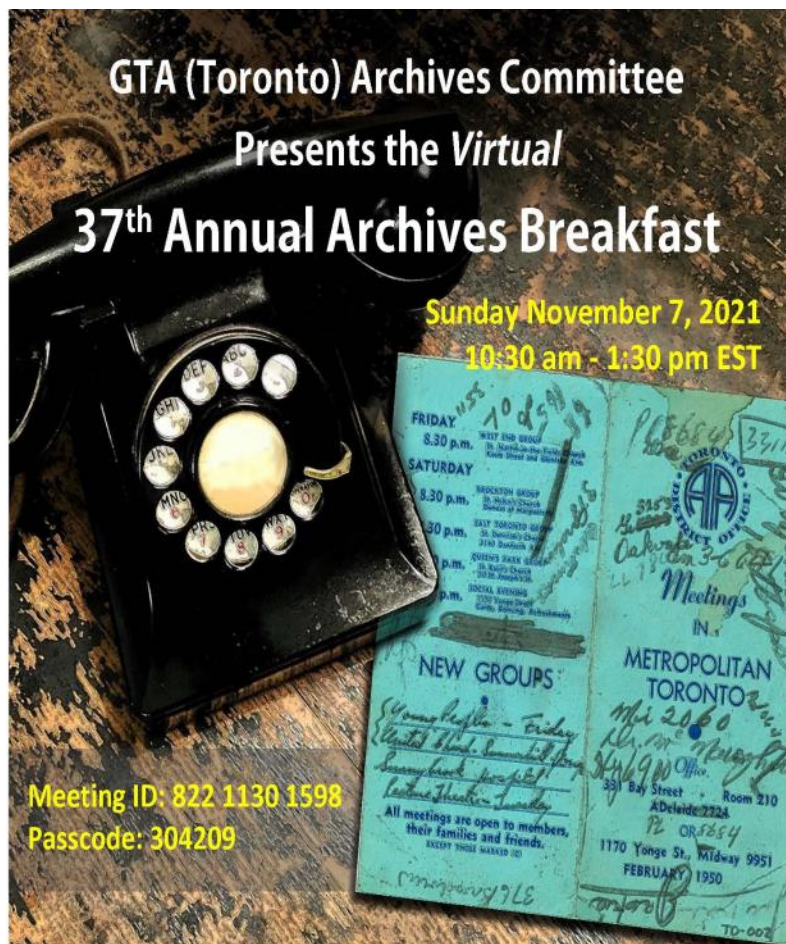
VISIT: aatoronto.org

It's not a lot
to get a lot and to give a lot
to the still suffering alcoholic !

GTA (Toronto) Archives Committee
Presents the *Virtual*
37th Annual Archives Breakfast

Sunday November 7, 2021
10:30 am - 1:30 pm EST

Meeting ID: 822 1130 1598
Passcode: 304209



11:00 am History of AA: A Canadian Perspective Presentation

12:00 noon Open Speaker Meeting
Maureen N. Streetsville Group
Sobriety Date: March 20, 1968
53 Years of Sobriety

Members may send contributions by e-transfer to ArchivesBkfst@gmail.com; a temporary account for contributions in support of the Archives committee's ongoing projects (history book, archives display and repository supplies).

7th Tradition
"Every A.A. group ought to be fully
self-supporting, declining outside contributions."



Stories about your first 90 days?



Send to: bettertimes@aatoronto.org

AA GRAPEVINE
The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

GROUP SPOTLIGHT

[Roxglen Traditional Beginners' Meeting](#)

RoxGlen Traditional started up in July of 1993. We started the beginner's meeting during the pandemic as we found a lot of people were trying to get sober but in an online forum, they were robbed of the fellowship aspect of the program and were missing out on some of the opportunities to learn about the basics. Most didn't know about the importance of a home group, getting a sponsor, and starting to work the steps. The beginner meeting is a really good introduction to the program of A.A. We only go through [steps 1, 2, and 3](#).

We had many newcomers joining on Zoom and they had a lot of questions. Because cross talk is discouraged in a traditional meeting, we felt a need existed and wanted to be that bridge. We'd give numbers and take numbers, but a lot of people would leave right after the meeting ended and those were missed opportunities to extend our hand and help. In terms of addressing if there was a need, our group has grown by at least 10 newcomers. They have connected with a group member either as a sponsor or temporary sponsor. They've begun working the steps and many are staying sober as they graduate to regular discussion and open meetings. There have been many others who have found home groups closer to where they physically live. For these people at least, the Beginners meeting has served as a bridge to A.A. and recovery.

The format seems to work really well. It's small, it's intimate, it's real, and sometimes raw. It's not traditional in nature and there are few guidelines. The format is fluid and we've got the means to really help people on the spot. We've got lists of members to connect people with, so they are not alone. The fact that the Beginner's meeting is followed by our closed meeting has been beneficial as well. People get to see the power of the program in real life. Many newcomers have expressed to us that this meeting really gives them a solid jumping off place. Quite a few have commented on how it helped them on their journey to acceptance. It has allowed them to find their voice in a more intimate venue where they felt comfortable asking questions. This comfort isn't always felt in a large meeting.

We only cover steps 1, 2, 3 and we encourage everyone to share. We try different things occasionally such as a History of A.A. share, but primarily it's a 1, 2, 3 meeting. It's a closed meeting, and the details are found on aatoronto.org

Service is key! The coordinator role is a 4-month commitment and usually two members with some traction in the program join to share their experience, strength, and hope. For now, it is only online. We are looking at options continually; right now, we are meeting the needs of the newcomer, but we always have an eye on what we can do better and/or differently.

-RGT