

# BETTER TIMES

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



# Turns 25



MARCH 2021

Did You Know?



FROM THE  
GTA A.A. ARCHIVES OF  
Alcoholics  
Anonymous



# Inter-Action

the voice of the groups and committees  
associated with Toronto Intergroup

Volume: 1

February, 1989

Issue #1

## THE FIRST EDITION OF THE BETTER TIMES NEWSLETTER WAS PUBLISHED IN MARCH OF 1996; however, like any new idea or project in A.A., it moved slowly and steadily through patience and careful consideration. It was born of love and service.

The first appearance of a newsletter to inform and inspire A.A.'s in the Toronto area was in February of 1989. The Newsletter at that time was called *Inter-Action*; a 4-page booklet. It was modest by today's standards and published quarterly. In addition to Editor's comments, it included group anniversaries, medallion announcements and group changes. It was offered for \$12 (20 copies issued each quarter).

The genesis of the Newsletter as it appears today began in December 1992. Seven members met to discuss the likelihood of success of this idea. Through a two-and-a-half year journey, a membership survey, funding issues, and publishing road-blocks, a mock-up of the proposed newsletter was presented to the GTA Intergroup Operating Committee in October of 1995. The Newsletter at that time was considered part of the Public Information Committee.

The concept of a monthly newsletter for the membership was spearheaded by the late Tom H. of the [Unionville Group](#). Through his service work with Public Information, it was evident that a monthly newsletter would be invaluable to the membership of Greater Toronto Area (GTA). This idea was endorsed by 85% of the membership at that time. Tom and his intrepid committee of seven envisioned that the first 4-page edition of the newsletter "would be in two colours on one side (pages one and four) and one colour on the inside pages".

The printing of the initial copies was left in the capable and committed hands of a fellow A.A., the late Dan McK. of the [Half Century Group](#).

The first printing run was 3,000 copies. Cost for printing was under 20 cents per issue. Different pricing per copy was discussed; the original cost was proposed at \$1; however, as Tom states, "...I had a meeting with Dan ... in his opinion, the newsletter ought to be peddled for 25 cents!"

The March 1996 edition of the *Better Times* was circulated cost-free to the fellowship. This was a collective decision made in order to garner enthusiasm and win members' support. Tom H. shared in a letter to the Operating Committee dated March 25, 1996 that "Eighty-four copies of the second issue were snapped up by members of the March 24 Toronto [Sunday Morning Men's Meeting](#)" and the general consensus of the membership was positive.

## BETTER TIMES

Published Monthly by Greater Toronto Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous

Vol 1, No. 1 March, 1996 25 cents per copy

### 50 years for Kingsway!

**A**lcoholics Anonymous got off to a running start in Toronto on May 8, 1946 when The Kingsway Group, the oldest group in the city and possibly its largest with over 350 registered members, had its first meeting. A half-century later, on May 8 of this year, Kingsway will celebrate its anniversary where it has been meeting regularly for the last thirty-two years. St. George's on the Hill, Anglican Church, 4600 Dundas Street West.

It will not be just another anniversary meeting. While details are still being sorted out, Ray L., chair of the group's committee taking on the task of ensuring an appropriately memorable occasion, is convinced it will indeed be just that — memorable. The speaker will be Linda W. of Media, Pennsylvania.

Over fifty years ago, The Kingsway Group had its genesis in informal meetings of three men who had one thing in common. They were alcoholics. For some time, Tom E., Goody G., and Doug S., had been getting together in Tom's law office at Bay and Adelaide or a restaurant on King St. just east of Yonge to share their experience, strength and hope with each other. Inevitably, they attracted other like-minded people, electing to form a group. Neither Tom's office nor the restaurant were roomy or appropriate enough for meetings, so they opted for the Parish House of St. James Cathedral in downtown Toronto.

That was in November of 1945. In May of the following year, another move had to be considered. At the suggestion of one of the members, Tom G., who lived in the Kingsway area, the group moved to Our Lady of Sorrows Church on Bloor W., the "Blue Top Church" as it was known. As all three

of the original members lived in the Kingsway, this was a popular choice of name for the group. Its first meeting was on May 8, 1946.

Excepting two or three weeks in 1948, when several members of the

Monday evening discussion meetings there ever since.

Fifty years of AA history in Toronto. Something well worth celebrating, eh?

Tom G.



The fellowship marches on! This 1952 photograph of Korea taken by the Department of National Defense is kept in the Toronto Intergroup archives (and faces have been obscured to protect anonymity). It's nice to see that our slogans can be made to fit many of life's situations. . .

group led by Goody G., left to start up the Hill Group at Timothy Eaton Memorial Church on St. Clair Ave. W., the Kingsway Group has met every week since. After seventeen years, the group had to find another site. It planned a second evening each week for a closed discussion meeting which Our Lady could not accommodate. St. George's on the Hill, Anglican Church could and the Kingsway Group has had its Wednesday evening open meetings and

#### Two bits! Worth it?

The first issue of BETTER TIMES is a freebie. That's right; it costs you nothing. But, as you must have noticed on page 1, it's priced at 25 cents per copy. And that is what it will cost for us to keep you informed on what's the news of AA hereabouts.

What do you think? Is it worth it? It is not a money-spinner amount, but, hopefully, it should cover our costs.



# BETTER TIMES

Published Monthly by Greater Toronto Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous

Vol. 1, No. 1

March, 1996

25 cents per copy

The front cover boldly proclaimed '**50 Years for Kingsway!**' The slogan of the month was **You are no longer alone!** The Editorial Committee at that time were comprised of solid A.A.'s who provided a wealth of skill-sets to the newsletter: Myles W. of [Open Mind Discussion group](#) who created our first version of [aatoronto.org](#); Ann P. (Glenview Discussion) served as Editor, along with the support of Lynn B., Jim C. of [North Toronto group](#); Tom G.; John H.; Otto S.; the late Kevin M. also of [North Toronto group](#); and the late Dan McK.

In her Editorial, Ann P. shared about the so-called good times that alcohol rendered us (or so we thought) followed by the inevitable bad times; hangovers, shame and remorse; she mused that "... we found A.A. ... found what was to be infinitely better times." And thus the legacy of the *Better Times* was born.

From 2000-2001, I was a member of the GTA Intergroup Operating Committee and had the opportunity to serve as liaison to the *Better Times* committee which had become a full-fledged committee. It was an interesting experience, as the meeting was held at the home of Myles W. and Ann P. There they graciously provided editing and technical set-up for publishing the newsletter.

I enjoyed the service experience so much that I stayed on the committee after my service term with the Operating Committee was over. There were some disgruntled members at that time who weren't keen on the committee meeting off-site and not at the Intergroup office. I remember these members were welcomed by both Myles and Ann to attend a committee meeting at any time.

One of those disgruntled members came to our committee meeting and ended up joining the *Better Times* committee! One ponders on the words in the [Big Book, p.568](#)): contempt prior to investigation.

The powerful piece for me has been engaging in the oral tradition of A.A.'s experience, strength and hope. Tangible through my service over the years with *Better Times*, through committee endeavours such as story submissions and featured cartoons. When I see a new edition of the newsletter, I swear I can hear both Dan McK. and Claude L. of District 14 bellowing at each and every monthly General Meeting (circa 1998) **"Get yer Better Tiiiimes!"**

I miss those days, but I carry them in my heart moving forward in sobriety, both in my personal recovery and my service work. This is, as I understand it, the spirit of love and service. **Happy 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, Better Times!** Alexx V., [St. Clements Group](#)  
Gratefully acknowledging the assistance of David T., Archives interim Chairperson; Marvyn W., Operating Committee Vice-Chairperson



GREATER TORONTO AREA  
**INTERGROUP**



[ORC A.A. and Al-Anon Zoom Moderators:](#)

[A.A. Zoom volunteer form](#)   [Al-Anon zoom volunteer form](#)

[2 Operating Committee Members](#)

[Self-Support Chair](#)

[IT Sub-Committee Members](#)

[Finance Committee Member](#)



# **"Carry the Vision"**

## **Ontario Regional Conference**

of Alcoholics Anonymous

# **March 19 - 21, 2021**

**www.aaorc.ca** for more info  
No Registration Required\*

### **AA Program**

**ID: 896 002 3291 password: orc2021**

**room cap 1,000**

**Zoom captioning enabled**

#### **Friday March 19**

7:00 pm EDT - AA Open Meeting - Lee Y, Sherwood, AR

#### **Saturday March 20**

9:00 am EDT - AA Open Meeting - Rachel F, Miami, FL

11:00 am EDT - Family Panel - Lori & Clif G, Oklahoma City, OK

1:30 pm EDT - AA Open Meeting - Peter M, Boca Raton, FL

3:30 pm EDT - AA Open Meeting - Gemma B, Los Angeles, CA

5:00 pm EDT - AA Open Meeting - Jeff V, Fargo, ND

7:00 pm EDT - AA Open Meeting - Diana M, Largo, FL

#### **Sunday March 21**

11:00 am EDT - AA Open Meeting - Clif G, Oklahoma City, OK

1:00 pm EDT - AA Open Meeting - Deb H, Akron, OH

**\*Alateen Preregistration at [www.AAORC.ca](http://www.AAORC.ca)**

### **Here's what some of our ORC Committee members have to say about volunteering:**

For me its a great way to give back to a society that has helped me more than any cheque I could sign. Robbie V.

An opportunity to give back and to be of service. The fellowship of others is so important, particularly now, when we can feel isolated and alone. A new way to stay connected! An honour to be part of. Sue P.

In early sobriety, I thought A.A. was just this one weekly meeting in the church basement. But my sponsor took me to district meetings, area assemblies and pointed me to conferences like the ORC. It is how I experienced that there is no A.A. if we're not there. We're it! This is our "Great Responsibility", carrying the message in different shapes and forms. I just love to see the whole herd together. A pandemic can't stop us! Wim D.

From 2019 through 2020, I listened to dozens and dozens of speakers before inviting an amazing lineup to join us in Toronto for the 2021 ORC. Of course, none of us realized it would happen over Zoom and not in a beautiful downtown hotel. But great speakers are great speakers so I'm excited about this year's virtual ORC, while also looking forward to a time when we can all meet again in person. Sandy D.

Over the years, the ORC has been a time to hear great speakers, reconnect with old friends and make new friends. I loved riding up and down the escalators of the Royal York and seeing so many friends I have connected with over the years. While we cannot be together in person this year, I am excited to be a part of the virtual ORC. Our hope is to keep the spirit of the ORC alive until we can all meet again in person, whenever that might be. Lisa W.





# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN's DAY March 8<sup>th</sup> and a nod to the women of **ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

See [aa.org](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-5_WomeninAA.pdf) pamphlet 5 (P-5) Women in A.A. [https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/p-5\\_WomeninAA.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-5_WomeninAA.pdf)



Common belief is that Marty Mann was the first woman in A.A. but it was actually "Lil", who relapsed and later got sober outside A.A. The first woman who attained any length of sobriety (although later relapsed) was Florence R., author of the chapter "A Feminine Victory", in the first edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Ms. Mann was, however, the first lesbian member of Alcoholics Anonymous at a time when gay and lesbians were not accepted by society, and the first woman who attained long term sobriety in A.A. She organized the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism (NCEA).



Nell Wing - tells of her 20 years as Bill W's personal secretary.

In 1947, she started working in the office of the Alcoholic Foundation (now the General Service Office), and in 1950 became Bill W's secretary.

1993 published a memoir called "Grateful to Have Been There".



**RUTH HOCK**  
became A.A.'s first  
national secretary.

"Ruth Hock, our nonalcoholic secretary, typed away as I slowly dictated the chapters of the text for the new book." *Bill W.*

## March 1941

Cleveland forms the fellowship's first women's group and also the first black women's group.

## March 18, 1944

The first reported women's prison group meets at Clinton Farms in Clinton, New Jersey.



**Helen Wynn**  
worked her way up  
over a period of  
years to become  
the managing  
editor of the  
*Grapevine* and left  
in 1962.



**Sylvia Kauffman—The Keys of the Kingdom**

Chicago, Illinois

Page 304 in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Editions and 268 in the 4<sup>th</sup>

Date of Sobriety: September 13, 1939

Helped start AA in Chicago

## REFLECTIONS ON TRADITION

**THREE** I have recently been doing some thinking about our Tradition 3:

### TRADITION THREE

The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

I think this is a most welcoming and all encompassing axiom of A.A. At a recent meeting I attended, people felt a sense of belonging that some have never felt elsewhere. The desire to belong to a group is a human characteristic fundamental to our sense of self and well-being. However, it does seem to say that if we are members of a group, there are some people who are not members of the group. This could be said to promote exclusivity and further along the "we vs. them" paradigm. This gets to be a little bit painful for me as there are so many clubs in the world that seem to be exclusive.

We alcoholics have all suffered some sort of trauma in our lives whether it be physical, emotional, or intellectual etc. Often traumatized people's coping mechanisms include addictive behaviours such as alcohol, drugs, gambling, sex, shopping, eating hoarding and more. These disguised addictive behaviours are really survival coping mechanisms gone bad.

I recently attended a gathering where shelter residents were invited. It was meant to be a drop in for coffee and conversation with light snacks. About 10 volunteers arrived, the food and snacks were plentiful, conversation started and we were all given red aprons to wear to welcome these visitors. After a few minutes of wearing these aprons we realized that we as volunteers were part of a group to which our visitors (they) would not belong!

We wanted to make our visitors feel welcome and this would not help us accomplish our goal. We all took off our aprons! Unfortunately, we only had one visitor that day but it was an interesting lesson learned and perhaps a lesson for us that all people in the world need to be more compassionate and

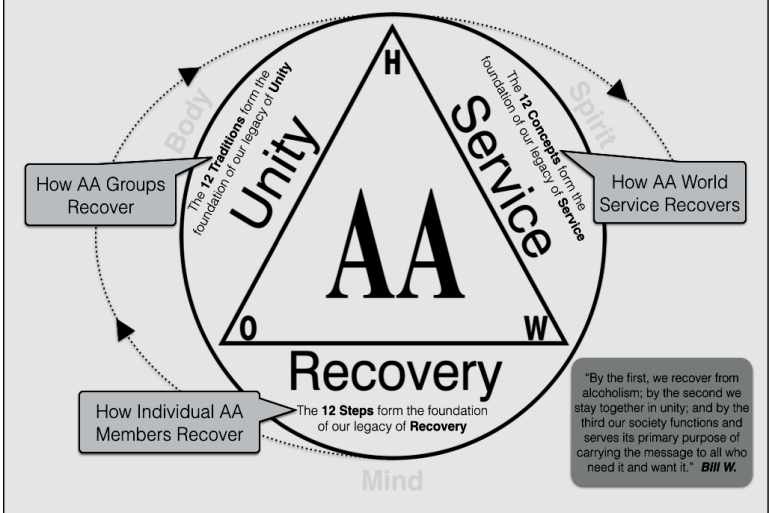
It seems these days everywhere you look there is exclusivity. In our own neighbourhood inhabitants of the shelter stick out like a sore thumb. Neighbourhood residents are unhappy about their presence in their midst. Feelings get to be so hard towards shelter residents and their behaviour when really, they are traumatized human beings deserving of compassion, just like we all are.

I am so grateful that I have been welcomed with open arms into the rooms of A.A. My wish for our fellowship as a whole is to be as welcoming to all people and to care for them as we alcoholics care for each other.

Humbly submitted by Martha K.,

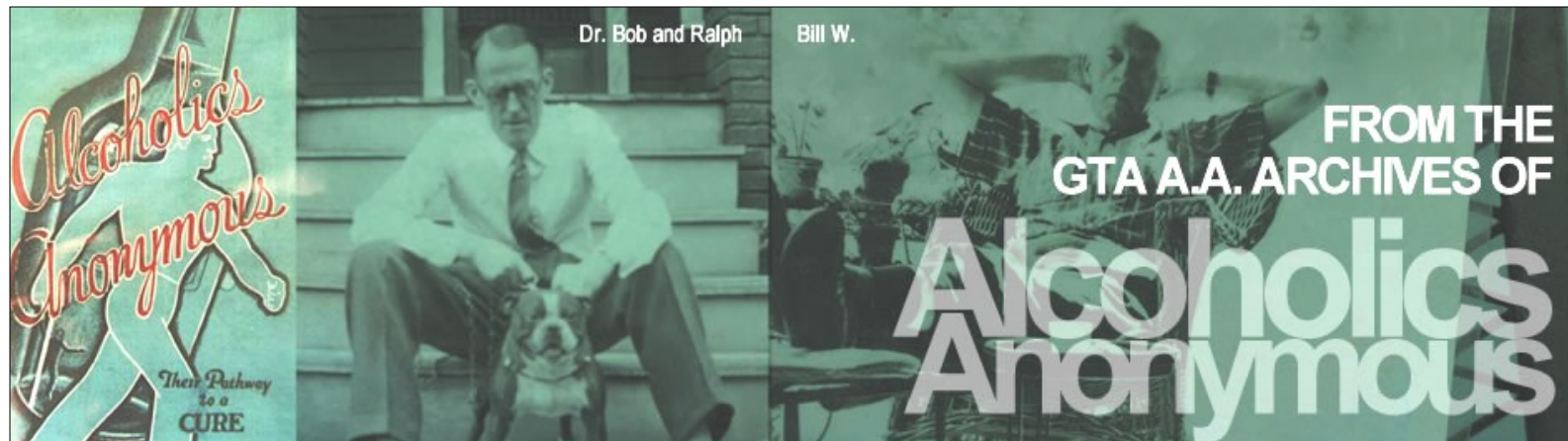
[Morning Discussion group](#)

### Alcoholics Anonymous' Three Legacies



NAME	YEARS	DRY DATE	GROUP	Celebration
Karen B.	25	Mar 7 1996	<a href="#">Anniversary</a>	Mar 10
Tiffany P.	40	Mar 3 1981	<a href="#">Erin Mills</a>	Mar 15
Glen G.	15	Mar 10 2006	<a href="#">Erin Mills</a>	Mar 22





In March 1935, at the urging of her friend Delphine Weber, Henrietta Sieberling organized a Wednesday night Oxford Group meeting at T. Henry and Clarence Williams home in Akron, Ohio specifically to help Dr. Bob with his drinking. Dr. Bob eventually openly admitted his drinking problem but could not bring himself to stop drinking. Oxford Group meetings continued at the Williams house until 1954.

March 21, 1966 Ebby T. who was sober 2 months through the Oxford Group when he carried the message to Bill W., died at age 69 of emphysema with 2 1/2 years of sobriety. Bill W. loyally referred to Ebby as his sponsor throughout his life.

March 1941 The Saturday Evening Post article on A.A. by Jack Alexander creates national sensation: A.A. membership will quadruple in one year from 2,000 to 8,000. Bill's and other member's pictures appear full-face in the article. The photo caption read, "A typical club house discussion group". Around 6,000 appeals for help were mailed to the NY office as a result of the article. The NY office asked groups to donate \$1.00 per member for support of the office. This began the practice of financing the NY office operations from group and member donations.

March 29, 1950, a 2nd Saturday Evening Post article was written by Jack Alexander entitled *The Drunkard's Best Friend*

March 1941 the 2nd printing of the Big Book was produced. The wording of Step 12 was changed. The term "spiritual experience" was changed to "spiritual awakening" and the term "as the result of these steps" was changed to "as the result of those steps". Also Appendix II, "Spiritual Experience" was added to the book. This was done because many members thought they had to have a sudden & spectacular spiritual experience similar to the one Bill W. had in Towns Hospital. The appendix emphasized that most spiritual experiences were of the type that the psychologist William James called "educational variety." In 1956 the wording of Step 12 changed again in the 2nd printing of the 2nd edition Big Book. The term "as the result of those steps" was changed back to "as the result of these steps".

The Herbert Spencer quote was added to Appendix II in the second edition Big Book. It first appeared in the story "An Artists Concept" by Ray C. (who also designed the Big Book's "circus color" dust jacket). Also the story "Lone Endeavor" (of Pat C. from Calif.) was removed. It had been ghost written by Ruth Hock. Pat, who claimed to have sobered up from a manuscript copy of the Big Book, was invited to NY shortly after the book was printed and arrived in NY quite drunk.

## THE FOLLOWING GTA GROUPS STARTED IN MARCH

March 1981	<a href="#">Aurora group</a>	40 years old
March 6, 1987	<a href="#">Lighthouse group</a>	34 years old
March 7, 1971	<a href="#">Trial &amp; Error group</a>	50 years old
March 8, 1971	<a href="#">King City group</a>	50 years old
March 11, 1986	<a href="#">Shepherd group</a>	35 years old
March 17, 1949	<a href="#">Sunnyside group</a>	72 years old
March 17, 1960	<a href="#">Port Credit group</a>	61 years old
March 17, 1981	<a href="#">St. Patrick's group</a>	40 years old
March 17, 1984	<a href="#">St. Andrew's group</a>	37 years old
March 19, 1970	<a href="#">Golden Mile group</a>	51 years old
March 29, 1984	<a href="#">Recovery group</a>	37 years old

## WHAT'S IN A TITLE?

From 1943 to 1949 references to anniversary and conference was used.

In 1950 the A.A. Conference name was used.

In 1951 the Regional Conference name was used.

In 1952 the Ontario A.A. Conference name was used.

**Ontario Regional Conference (ORC) name was used for the first time in March 1953**

**CONTACT ARCHIVIST EDDY G. 416-536-7536 TO DONATE A.A. ITEMS INCLUDING OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS.**

# WORD search



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## SUBMIT A BETTER TIMES ARTICLE!!

Please send us in your own words, your ideas, your journey, your experience, strength and hope in 200-500 words to [bettertimes@aatoronto.org](mailto:bettertimes@aatoronto.org) \*

## TRADITION three

*"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."*

S	D	O	S	W	C	H	Y	C	T	R	N	O	I	T	C	I	D	D	A	Tradition
R	D	F	P	O	D	R	V	I	V	O	R	Y	I	T	R	D	S	I	P	Only
M	E	L	U	X	F	T	R	Z	R	S	E	O	V	D	F	Y	S	O	V	Stop
I	Z	E	G	M	L	Q	X	C	T	O	B	Z	X	F	E	L	U	X	R	Desire
R	I	S	F	M	I	Z	J	O	Z	R	O	X	Y	Z	R	F	Y	X	E	Sober
T	T	R	N	B	V	C	P	I	U	C	S	E	T	Q	F	Y	I	C	Y	Addiction
Q	A	U	N	O	I	T	A	N	I	M	R	E	T	E	D	B	N	B	L	Three
B	M	O	Q	C	I	R	G	P	L	T	L	C	K	J	C	A	G	A	N	Declare
H	G	Y	H	W	A	T	E	C	N	E	D	I	V	O	R	P	U	N	O	Membership
T	I	O	W	L	I	J	A	L	D	X	Y	U	N	E	N	V	Z	D	L	Anonymous
R	T	R	F	G	D	S	K	L	T	E	G	K	L	F	N	X	Z	Q	L	Yourself
A	S	S	O	C	I	E	T	Y	U	P	S	O	L	A	G	T	G	A	V	Drinking
D	U	H	V	P	P	R	I	S	M	G	T	I	V	U	H	Y	P	L	Z	Regulations
I	U	K	C	C	S	V	I	Q	C	N	E	D	R	R	B	I	K	A	G	Protective
T	D	E	C	L	A	R	E	Y	I	I	M	R	E	E	C	J	Q	N	K	Intolerance
I	P	Y	L	S	S	E	L	T	N	E	L	E	R	N	X	N	Z	O	E	Patience
O	H	R	L	M	V	P	Y	A	M	W	C	O	I	M	O	V	F	N	C	Teachers
N	U	G	O	X	B	J	M	B	U	N	F	R	H	X	Q	B	F	Y	I	Newcomer
U	K	X	Q	T	Z	M	E	O	H	X	P	N	B	O	J	X	K	M	F	Alcoholics
F	C	O	X	V	N	E	R	C	O	N	F	I	D	E	N	C	E	T	O	Intimate
R	L	S	O	L	S	C	U	L	M	K	A	T	Z	H	H	L	B	U	R	Friends
D	S	H	I	H	W	X	T	L	I	D	R	N	C	O	H	G	A	S	C	Determination
D	X	D	I	Y	W	W	K	I	C	Q	E	T	A	M	I	T	N	I	A	Principal
R	P	P	B	U	E	G	K	Y	V	B	Z	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	S	Stigmatized
I	S	R	I	W	N	Q	T	I	E	E	I	S	D	Y	V	T	N	C	D	Dilemma
N	J	C	G	W	P	A	T	I	E	N	C	E	A	A	P	E	I	S	G	Confidence
K	X	O	I	Q	L	U	O	R	C	T	E	A	C	H	E	R	S	M	A	Sacrifice
I	R	S	L	J	G	G	H	N	O	I	S	S	I	M	D	A	U	R	E	Admission
N	Y	P	Z	F	A	K	N	E	W	C	O	M	E	R	M	M	E	X	A	Relentlessly
G	H	A	L	P	V	K	G	B	U	S	Z	W	U	H	I	N	H	I	W	Providence
																				Society

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**ALL MEDIA INQUIRIES ARE TO BE SENT TO THE OPERATING COMMITTEE CHAIR [oc.chair@aatoronto.org](mailto:oc.chair@aatoronto.org)**





# I Stand at the Door

## A POEM

By Sam Shoemaker  
(from the Oxford Group)

Alcoholics  
Anonymous

I stand by the door.  
I neither go too far in, nor stay too far out.  
The door is the most important door in the world -  
It is the door through which men walk when they find God.  
There is no use my going way inside and staying there,  
When so many are still outside and they, as much as I,  
Crave to know where the door is.  
And all that so many ever find  
Is only the wall where the door ought to be.  
They creep along the wall like blind men,  
With outstretched, groping hands,  
Feeling for a door, knowing there must be a door,  
Yet they never find it.  
So I stand by the door.

The most tremendous thing in the world  
Is for men to find that door - the door to God.  
The most important thing that any man can do  
Is to take hold of one of those blind, groping hands  
And put it on the latch - the latch that only clicks  
And opens to the man's own touch.

Men die outside the door, as starving beggars die  
On cold nights in cruel cities in the dead of winter.  
Die for want of what is within their grasp.  
They live on the other side of it - live because they have  
not found it.

Nothing else matters compared to helping them find it,  
And open it, and walk in, and find Him.  
So I stand by the door.

Go in great saints; go all the way in -  
Go way down into the cavernous cellars,  
And way up into the spacious attics.  
It is a vast, roomy house, this house where God is.  
Go into the deepest of hidden casements,  
Of withdrawal, of silence, of sainthood.  
Some must inhabit those inner rooms  
And know the depths and heights of God,  
And call outside to the rest of us how wonderful it is.  
Sometimes I take a deeper look in.  
Sometimes venture in a little farther,  
But my place seems closer to the opening.  
So I stand by the door.

There is another reason why I stand there.  
Some people get part way in and become afraid  
Lest God and the zeal of His house devour them;  
For God is so very great and asks all of us.  
And these people feel a cosmic claustrophobia  
And want to get out. 'Let me out!' they cry.  
And the people way inside only terrify them more.  
Somebody must be by the door to tell them that they are spoiled.  
For the old life, they have seen too much:  
One taste of God and nothing but God will do any more.  
Somebody must be watching for the frightened  
Who seek to sneak out just where they came in,  
To tell them how much better it is inside.  
The people too far in do not see how near these are  
To leaving - preoccupied with the wonder of it all.  
Somebody must watch for those who have entered the door  
But would like to run away. So for them too,  
I stand by the door.

I admire the people who go way in.  
But I wish they would not forget how it was  
Before they got in. Then they would be able to help  
The people who have not yet even found the door.  
Or the people who want to run away again from God.  
You can go in too deeply and stay in too long  
And forget the people outside the door.  
As for me, I shall take my old accustomed place,  
Near enough to God to hear Him and know He is there,  
But not so far from men as not to hear them,  
And remember they are there too.

Where? Outside the door -  
Thousands of them. Millions of them.  
But - more important for me -  
One of them, two of them, ten of them.  
Whose hands I am intended to put on the latch.  
So I shall stand by the door and wait  
For those who seek it.

'I had rather be a door-keeper  
**So I stand by the door.**