

BETTER TIMES



Produced monthly by A.A. members for the Greater Toronto Area November 2019



Illustration by Zack R., The Friendly Group

ASK YOURSELF THIS; How much do I really need?

What do I need?
Is it necessary and why?
Will having it change me my life?
How important is it really?

Get that and use that and when it runs out get more—take what you need.
Re-examining priorities and adjusting.
Change is good and necessary. When I came in the rooms, what needed to change?
Before I came to A.A. only two things were important; getting alcohol and the means.

When I change how I look at people, places and things,

The people, places and things I look at change,

FOR THAT I AM GRATEFUL !

WORD search



SUBMIT A BETTER TIMES ARTICLE!!

Please send us in your own words, your ideas, your journey experience, strength and hope 200-500 words to bettertimes@aatoronto.org *

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STEP 11 *Hidden word will appear next month*

F	E	I	L	E	R	K	L	O	F	W	T	T	S	M
D	N	A	T	S	R	E	D	N	U	N	R	T	P	Y
E	R	E	E	S	D	C	D	E	E	P	R	O	T	A
W	E	V	T	I	U	L	O	R	A	E	L	I	N	T
O	B	I	H	R	O	O	E	N	N	L	L	E	S	G
L	E	T	G	S	Y	F	I	G	T	A	I	E	H	S
L	L	C	I	A	F	I	T	C	E	A	R	N	Y	T
O	L	A	M	I	T	H	N	R	S	I	C	M	G	L
F	I	I	D	E	I	R	T	G	O	N	P	T	I	U
G	N	I	S	I	R	P	R	U	S	A	O	A	O	S
N	G	P	U	R	P	O	S	E	T	X	F	C	Q	E
T	I	F	E	N	E	B	A	H	P	R	A	Y	E	R
J	G	L	D	E	P	R	I	V	E	R	E	W	O	P
T	H	G	U	O	S	Z	I	M	P	R	O	V	E	L
Y	H	I	G	H	E	R	N	E	V	E	R	J	X	V

ACTIVE	REBELLING
APT	RELIEF
BENEFIT	RESULTS
CONSCIOUS	SERIOUS
CONTACT	SOLD
DEALING	SOUGHT
DEPRIVE	STRENGTH
DIFFERENT	SURPRISING
FAIL	SYMPATHIZE
FOLK	TRIED
FOLLOWED	TRYING
HELP	UNDERSTAND
HIGHER	WRONG
IMPROVE	
MIGHT	
NEVER	
POWER	
PRAYER	
PURPOSE	
REALITY	

Hidden word from previous month **GRATITUDE**

Opinions expressed in *BETTER TIMES* are those of the authors and don't necessarily reflect those of the Greater Toronto Area Intergroup. The editorial staff reserve the right to edit submitted articles for length, content and grammar in accordance with layout and quality purposes.

Letters to the editor or articles (200-500 words) for *BETTER TIMES* at bettertimes@aatoronto.org

Submit group news, medallions, other event notices to communications@aatoronto.org

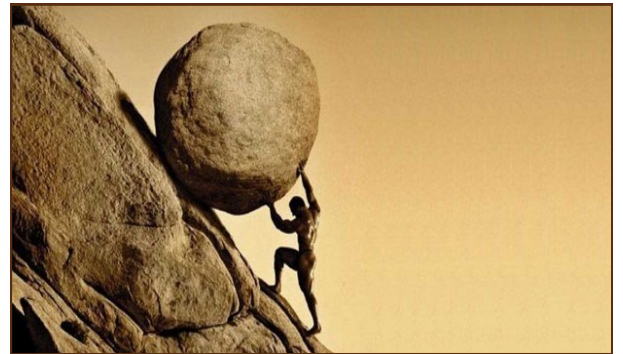
The Myth of Sisyphus

Some of us may be familiar with the story of the Greek tragic hero Sisyphus. In his myth, he was the smartest of all mortals, and “put the God of the Underworld, Pluto, in chains”, so that no one would die. The gods finally set Pluto free, and Sisyphus was condemned to death for his crime. However, he tricked Pluto to escape the underworld, and managed to live on for many more years before Hermes dragged him back to Hades.

**I was thinking about *not*
drinking almost all day,
which meant I was
thinking about *drinking*
almost all day!**

For his insolence and temerity, he was sentenced to roll a giant boulder up a hill, which he would toil and strain at for the long, hot day, only, at the moment he reached the crest, to have the rock roll relentlessly down to the valley, and then, he’d have to walk down that hill to start again, knowing that he would have to do this, over and over, for the rest of time. “Sisyphean” has entered our language to mean a task that seems endless, that has to be repeated as soon as it’s over.

When I was first getting sober, staying so certainly seemed Sisyphean. Yes, I’d give thanks every night that I’d stayed sober, but that didn’t make doing it the next day any easier. In fact, at the beginning, it seemed to be getting worse; after the first couple of weeks, I was thinking about *not* drinking almost all day, which meant I was thinking about *drinking* almost all day! The cravings kept getting more intense, and I had moments of despair that I could not do this, that I would have to have a drink at some time, or I’d go crazy. I truly felt like Sisyphus; I’d push that giant ball of sobriety up the hill every day, and every night, it would roll back down. Only the rock was getting heavier each day, and the hill was growing higher. If I had tried to do it on my own, I know I would have succumbed, and let that rock roll over and crush me.



But I had my girlfriend, my group, and my program as my three pillars of strength. I made a special promise to my girlfriend each night. I got involved in service with my group. And in our closed meetings, I came to understand the program as we read and talked about the steps in another never-ending cycle from one to twelve. And, as the program promised, the *obsession* began to lift. It came and went during my first year, but my rock was no longer getting heavier, nor the hill higher.

Six years now, and I honestly can’t remember when I last craved a drink. My hill is almost level, and my rock is pretty much a pebble. It doesn’t take much effort to move it up the hill anymore; I don’t even notice it. It doesn’t take much to keep it that way either – go to meetings, do a bit of service, and have a partner/sponsor you trust. Three small investments that deliver you your life.

And to the newcomer, my advice is this: stick it out. I know how bad you will feel trying to stay sober when the cravings hit; I know that little voice that says “just one. *This* time, it will be just one, I promise”; I know all the lies and justifications you can make to yourself. That’s you pushing your rock up the hill, and while I know you will feel like Sisyphus, maybe for months, I can assure you eventually the rock crumbles, and the hill shrinks. One day at a time.

Kevin B. , North Toronto Group

FROM THE ARCHIVES; Did you know?

On Nov. 11, 1934 Bill W.'s final drunk begins and lasts about a month.

In Nov. 1934 Ebby T visits Bill W. & tells him his story.

In November 1936 Fitz M. leaves Towns Hospital to become NY area AA No. 3. Bill W. and Hank P. are the other 2.

In November 1937, AA has 40 sober members in Akron and New York.

On Nov. 27, 1939 Cleveland Plain Dealer runs first of a series of articles on AA. Cleveland will soon have more AA members than anywhere in the country.

On November 19, 1939 Bill W.'s money problems make him want to go back to work, but New York AA's urge him to stay on as head of the movement.

In November 1940 the Alcoholic Foundation (now General Service Board of AA) publishes the first AA Bulletin.

In November 1943 New York AA celebrates 9th Anniversary with a dinner attended by 800. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale is the guest speaker.

On November 26, 1943, 6 Toronto AA members went to London, Ont. and helped to start London AA Club.

In November 1939 Hank P. (New York AA #2) writes Bill W. advocating autonomy for all AA groups.

On November 25, 1948 the first AA group in Europe is established in Dublin, Ireland.

In November 1949 Bill W. suggests AA groups everywhere devote Thanksgiving week to discussions of the Twelve Traditions.

On Nov. 16, 1950 Dr. Bob dies. He is 15 yrs. sober.

On November 25, 1956 the East Toronto Men's Meeting started.

In November 1986 the Big Book is published in paperback.

On November 22, 1990 Toronto Intergroup divided the Institutions Committee into Corrections & Treatment. **Eddy G.— GTA Archivist**

*OVER THE YEARS,
TO THE ARCHIVES*

..... HOW?

WHERE?

WHY? ASK

THE ARCHIVIST



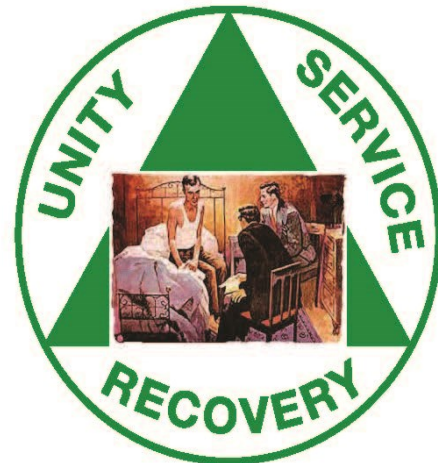
The GTA Archives Committee invites you to attend the

35th Annual GTA Archives Breakfast *Sunday November 3, 2019*

Oasis Convention Centre
(1036 Lakeshore Rd. E., Mississauga)

9am-1pm, Tickets \$25

9am – Coffee | **10am** – Breakfast | **11am** – Open Speaker Meeting
Door Prizes, Raffle Tickets



*Come join us for a fantastic breakfast, fellowship,
and hear what it was like from one of our long-timers*

For Tickets Contact:

SecretaryGTAarchives@gmail.com

"Whenever a society or civilization perishes there is always one condition present; they forgot where they came from."
- Carl Sandburg.

This is A.A. General Service
Conference-approved literature

A.A.'s LEGACY OF SERVICE

by Bill W.

What is the basic A.A. service?

The Fellowship's responsibility

The pioneers' battle for the Big Book

News stories and sudden A.A. growth

Beginnings of group and world services

Origin of the Twelve Traditions

G.S.O. today

THIS IS A REPRINT FROM
"THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL"

The complete manual, an invaluable
guide in Fellowship activity, is available
from the General Service Office.

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Winter Season Open House

Fellowship, food, fun, AA and AI Anon meetings
Selfie with Santa!

Wednesday, December 25, 2019
10 AM - 4 PM

College Street United Church

454 College Street, Toronto
(corner of College Street and Bathurst Street)

Got to www.TTC.ca/Trip Planner

For more information go to www.aatoronto.org
email wsoh@aatoronto.org

Contact Event Chair: Edward A. 647-333-6415

Calling on Volunteers

Service opportunity for the following :

Greeters, Set-up, Kitchen help,
Food prep, Servers, Turkey cookers, Meetings support, Tear-down,

Contact Volunteer Coordinator
Nicole 416-575-7639 or wsoh@aatoronto.org

PHONE GREETERS NEEDED

Please call 416-487-5591 or

EMAIL 12step@aatoronto.org

Circles of Love and Service

*How A.A.s work together to help
the alcoholic who still suffers*

This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.
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A.A.'s LEGACY of SERVICE by Bill W.

Our Twelfth Step — carrying the message — is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer — ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship.

85th ANNIVERSARY

International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous

July 2 - 5 2020 in Detroit Michigan

Love and Tolerance Is Our Code



- DISCOVER DETROIT
- MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS!
- A.A. EVENTS IN THE MOTOR CITY!
- AL-ANON AND ALATEEN ACTIVITIES
- 2020 INTERNATIONAL A.A. CONVENTION SOUVENIR BOOK
- AA GRAPEVINE's COMMEMORATIVE BOOK
- CONVENTION APP

See more info. here www.aa.org

IF YOU WANT WHAT WE HAVE

ORC 2020

March 20-22, 2020

Sheraton Centre Hotel
123 Queen Street West
TORONTO

Beyond Belief Agnostics & Freethinkers

Celebrates 10 years!
Saturday
November 23rd
at 6:30 p.m.

Topic Discussion meeting
Potluck

O.I.S.E. Building
Room 2-296
252 Bloor Street West

Toronto (Central)

Westmoreland Group

Celebrates 40 years!
Tuesday
November 12th
at 8 p.m.

Candlelight meeting
coffee, food & snacks!

St. Paul's Presbyterian
Church
100 Hepbourne Street

Toronto (Central)

The Beverly Hills Group

Registered: Nov. 11, 1969

Will Celebrate
Fifty Years

of
Continuous Service
to Alcoholics

Friday November 15, 2019

at 8:00 P.M.

Greenborough Community Church
2000 Keele St.
north of Eglinton Ave.

Everyone Welcome
Food Donations Welcome



OCTOBER—NOVEMBER 2019

@ Oct 24th

#	NAME	YEARS	DRY DATE	GROUP	MEDALLION
1	Darrell H.	30	Oct. 1 1989	Six Points Group	Oct. 7 2019
2	Larissa P.	1	Sep. 13 2018	King City Group	Oct. 7 2019
3	Linda W.	30	Aug. 28 1988	King City Group	Oct. 7 2019
4	John K.	1	Sep. 27 2018	Fifth Tradition Group	Oct. 8 2019
5	MaryAnn S.	1	Oct. 7 2018	Golden Mile Group	Oct. 9 2019
6	Emily L.B.	1	Oct. 9 2018	Richmond Hill Group	Oct. 11 2019
7	Grace B.	1	Oct. 7 2018	Lighthouse Group	Oct. 11 2019
8	Rachel H.	1	Oct. 14 2018	Six Points Group	Oct. 14 2019
9	David H.	5	Oct. 14 2014	Fifth Tradition Group	Oct. 15 2019
10	Larry B.	1	Oct. 16 2018	Kipling Group	Oct. 17 2019
11	Sheila F.	45	Oct. 17 1974	Keep it Simple Group	Oct. 20 2019
12	Carol B.	25	Oct. 17 1994	Erin Mills Group	Oct. 21 2019
13	Don I.	25	Oct. 21 1994	Prince Edward Group	Oct. 21 2019
14	Eddie F.	15	Oct. 19 2004	Erin Mills Group	Oct. 21 2019
15	Ari W.	5	Oct. 20 2014	Tuesday's at Seven Group	Oct. 22 2019
16	Paul McD.	25	Jun. 3 1994	Lighthouse Group	Oct. 25 2019
17	Joe S.	29	Oct. 24 1990	Birds of a Feather Group	Oct. 27 2019
18	Nancy H.	30	Oct. 25, 1989	Mississauga Group	Oct. 27 2019
19	Paul D.	1	Oct. 21 2018	Six Points Group	Oct. 28 2019
20	Catherine C.	5	Sep. 22 2014	Fifth Tradition Group	Oct. 29 2019
21	Nancy B.	1	Oct. 28 2018	The Crossroads Group	Nov. 3 2019
22	Tyler M.	1	Nov. 4 2018	Prince Edward Group	Nov. 4 2019
23	Christine F.	1	Oct. 5 2018	King City Group	Nov. 4 2019
24	Bert H.	20	Nov. 1 1999	Beaches Group	Nov. 5 2019
25	Meagan K.	5	Nov. 4 2014	Anniversary Group	Nov. 6 2019
26	Jenny O.	1	Nov. 21 2018	Sisters in Sobriety	Nov. 27 2019
27	Kathryn G.	5	Nov. 27 2014	New Anchor Group	Nov. 28 2019

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Step 11



Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out



This is a spiritual step. We are making a mindful attempt at bettering our understanding of the path that our Higher Power has for us by talking and listening to our higher power through prayer and meditation.



OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE NEEDED FOR THE GTA ARCHIVES
 To donate A.A./GTA archival items to the GTA Archives,
 Please contact the **GTA ARCHIVIST EDDY G. at 416-536-7536**

GROUP SPOTLIGHT:

Stepping Stones Discussion Group

As of September, the group is officially 40 years old

Stepping Stones is a large meeting. It's full of diversity, ages, and lengths within sobriety. I remember when I was a newcomer that's what stood out most to me. To walk into a room of 60-70 people whom all struggled with the same issues I had, was really comforting. It also doesn't hurt we serve cookies and coffee at every meeting.

Stepping Stones meets twice a week. Wednesdays and Saturday's from 8-9:30 p.m. Every 3rd Saturday of the month we take the time to recognize sobriety and have a medallion celebration which is also our speaker meeting, known as open meetings.

Wednesday nights you have a choice of participating in either steps 1-12 meeting or a step 11 meditation meeting. On Saturdays you have a choice in participating in a step 1-3 meeting or Big Book discussion meeting.

We just celebrated a big birthday (of 40 years) and welcomed everyone to our anniversary party! It was held at our new location 789 Dovercourt Road. We had a panel of speakers and a pot luck dinner. It was held October 5th at 8 p.m.

also, as a large group there are tons of opportunities to do service whether you're a newcomer or have been around for a while. Every 2nd Saturday of the month we have a business meeting at 6:30 p.m. when we dictate service positions as there are always a handful available!

We also do monthly service meetings at [CAMH \(Centre for Addiction and Mental Health\)](#) that people can get involved with whether they're a group member or not.

At 789 Dovercourt there's plenty of street parking as we do not have a parking lot and we're only a 2 minute walk from the Ossington subway station. If you are exiting via Delaware (from the station), we are located right on Dovercourt, half a block north of Bloor Street.



PROUD TO BE NISH Hello my name is Joe and I am an Anishinabe sober alcoholic. I am Algonquin First Nations and very proud of it. Anishinabe is often translated as "first man", "original man", or a "good person peoples". My Spirit Name is Pizongwakineew which translates to The Strong Voice of the Eagle. I am from the Eagle Clan. My dry date is October 24, 1990. The last drink was October 23, 1990 and I will never forget that night. I did not know it would be my last drink but my Creator knew.

Almost 29 years later I reflect that it has been a great journey. I am more proud of my culture and heritage than ever before. Being in A.A. and being Anishinabe I believe go hand in hand because my culture is very spiritual and very giving of what we have. A.A. is giving back what we received freely and my culture is giving back to Mother Earth and the land.

I grew up in an alcoholic home, a very violent home at times. My mother did the best she could with what she had and as a single mom. My dad walked out on me at age five. My brother twenty-four years older than me was my only male role model and he was a violent alcoholic. This did not make me alcoholic. Nothing that happened to me in life made me an alcoholic. I am an alcoholic today because I have an allergy to alcohol. Something happens to me that does not happen in the normal drinker. I get a phenomenon of craving that happens in my body. Reading my Big Book and going through the twelve-steps my life started to change. I stopped drinking and my obsession stopped. I joined a group got myself a sponsor who is still my sponsor today. I never knew a life without alcohol. Today I cannot imagine life without A.A. I cannot imagine my life without my Creator God today. I have been through a divorce, a job loss, the death of my brother and my cousin in the last few years but never had to pick up a drink, now that is a miracle. Nothing happens in God's world by mistake. I am blessed today. Proud to be Nish.

Joe S., Birds of a Feather Group