

BETTER TIMES



Produced monthly by AA members in the Greater Toronto

September 2019

85th ANNIVERSARY International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous July 2 - 5 2020 in Detroit Michigan



Online registration will be available September 9, 2019 at www.aa.org

REGISTER EARLY FOR DISCOUNTED PRICE!

- Registrations received between September 9, 2019 and April 14, 2020 will be \$115.00 USD per attendee
- Registration after April 15, 2020 will be \$140.00 USD per attendee
- For further information please see the [FAQs](#) .See you in Detroit!

THE GAINS OF GIVING UP

"We rise by kneeling, we conquer by surrendering, we gain by giving up." Alice A. Bailey, "The Labors of Hercules."

I don't want to die since I sobered up — it no longer seems preferable to living. I'm not crushed under such day-to-day hopelessness that a coma sounds like a vacation. I harbor no secret fantasies of getting hit by a bus.

I can see my apartment floor. Getting my place presentable takes fifteen minutes — not five hours. I'm not ashamed to have company. My bathroom is clean. I go to sleep in a freshly made bed. All my plants are watered and all my pets are fed. I don't worry that I'm killing my cat with my lifestyle.

If I run out of toothpaste or toilet paper, I just go buy more. Routine errands don't put me in a panic. When a prescription runs out, I refill it. When I'm sick I make a doctors appointment. I have food in my fridge. I shower every day. I floss. My clothes are clean. I don't fear bedtime. Sleep comes when it's ready to - not when I've put enough poison in my body to shut down my brain. I don't have the sensation of falling or spinning as I drift off to bed. My alarm clock doesn't sound like a prison sentence. My last act at night and first in the morning is to pray, not vomit.

I've had the same job for over a year, and I like it. My boss can rely on me. I can ask for help when I need it. If I make a mistake it's not because I was hungover. If I'm running late it's not because I was up partying the night before. I'm not always waiting to get fired.

I have friends I can count on, and reasonable expectations of them. It's not our obligation to save each other. The things that connect us cannot be drank, smoked or snorted.. I work hard to have boundaries - to be neither an omnipresence nor a glaring absence in their lives. I remember that they have their own problems, just as I have mine.

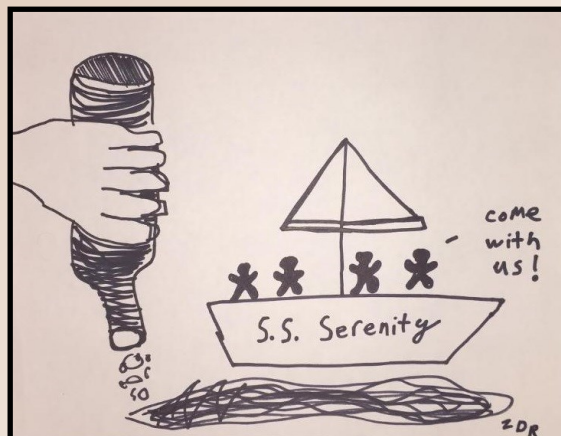
I haven't told anyone to "F@#! off" since I've been sober. I neither keep - nor am - toxic company.

I don't dread talking to my mom - I have so much to tell her and none of it is sad. When she says "I can't even recognize you" it's a compliment. My older sisters see me as an adult, not a child. Their kids see me as an uncle. I can be present for them.

All because I made a decision to stop drinking and attend Alcoholics Anonymous. Then I made the decision to stop fighting the program and the people in it. To stop fighting the world. To stop fighting nature. It's easier to be sober than drunk, even when it's hard.

I'm two weeks away from my one-year medallion - I'm living proof that change can come when we ask for it.

Written and illustrated by **Zack R., The Friendly Group**



WORD search



SUBMIT A BETTER TIMES ARTICLE!! Please send us in your own words, your ideas, your journey experience, strength and hope 100-500 words to bettertimes@aatoronto.org *

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Mary M. Editor

STEP 9 *Hidden word will appear next month*

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

ADMIT
AMENDS
APPROACH
AREA
ATTITUDE
BEAM
BEGIN
CAREFUL
CAUTION
CERTAIN
CRITICS
DAMAGE
DEALT
DEFER
DIRECT
FAMILY
GOOD
HARMED
JUDGMENT
LIST
NEWS
OBLIGATION
OUGHT
PEOPLE
PROCEED
PRUDENCE
REFLECT
RIGHT
SELDOM
SENSE
SHOUT
TIMING

LAST MONTH'S HIDDEN WORD: WILLING

* 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. Submit group news, medallions, other event notices, letters to the editor or articles to BETTER TIMES before the 7th of the month prior to the month of issue. Submissions should be 100 to 500 words by email to bettertimes@aatoronto.org

WHERE DO I STAND IN A.A. ?

I know that all of you were saddened to learn this week of the death of one of our Alcoholics Anonymous's most valuable members -- Someone Else.

Someone Else's passing created a vacancy that will be difficult to fill.

They had been with us for many years, and for every one of those years, Someone Else did far more than the normal person's share of the work.

Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration as well as results.

Someone Else can work with that drunk.

Whenever there was a job to do, service work, or someone needed a ride to a meeting, one name was on everyone's lips, "Let Someone Else do it."

It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the largest givers in AA.

Whenever there was a financial need, everyone just assumed that Someone Else would make up the difference.

Someone Else was a wonderful person, sometimes appearing super-human, but a person can only do so much.

Were the truth known, everyone expected too much of Someone Else.

Now Someone Else is gone. We wonder what we are going to do. Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things Someone Else did?

Remember, we can't depend on Someone Else anymore. Where do I stand in AA? **Author Unknown**



Photo courtesy Ed G.

CALL OUT FOR SERVICE!! Be a Spiritual Warrior

Executive Committee (EC) - 2 volunteers needed

Sobriety Requirement: 2 years, and a least 1 year as an intergroup representative
Commitment: attend 3 meetings monthly, Liaison commitment, EC meetings and Monthly Assembly
Committee description: <https://www.aatoronto.org/about/service-committees/finance/>
For further inquiries: please email intergroupchair@aatoronto.org

Financial Committee 2 volunteers needed

Finance Chair: 5 years sobriety requirement and Accounting Designation CA, CGA, CMA, CPA,
Finance member: years sobriety requirement and an accounting background
Commitment: attend one monthly meeting
Committee description: <https://www.aatoronto.org/about/service-committees/finance/>
For inquiries: please email financechair@aatoronto.org

Winter Season Open House Committee – 1 volunteer needed

Chair Person: 2 years sobriety requirement
Committee description: <https://www.aatoronto.org/about/service-committees/winter-season-open-house/>
For inquiries: please email wsch@aatoronto.org

New Information Technology (IT) Committee - provide technical support to Intergroup office, computers hardware, software and internet.

For inquiries: please email: techsupport@aatoronto.org

Work Shop Committee

For inquiries: please email: bertj97@yahoo.ca

12 YEARS SOBRIETY and RELAPSED

I am an Alberta cowboy. I work hard and play harder. I am an alcoholic from the first drink in 1980 when I was 4 years old. My past is very colourful and includes rodeos, 17 years of hockey, singing, football, baseball and clowning.

I applied and am a successful candidate for The Toronto Film School which was to begin July 8, 2019. I was looking forward to many new things including film school.

A close call on May 31, 2019 ended my 12 years of sobriety as I was confronted by my past. A drink was shoved into my chest I was told to drink under threats by the bikers I feared. I felt cornered and terrified...no way out ...I felt like I needed to prove myself so I had a couple of sips, then a second can was shoved at me and I drank half, then the third I gulped it like I used to drink many years ago. I wanted to keep going....it happened that fast! I couldn't stop nor did I want to.

The past debt I tried to forget and ignore was haunting me. I tried to escape this responsibility by leaving Toronto and went to Kitchener and London Ontario. I had the fear put into me so I listened and did what I was told. See to it that I wasn't hurt and put into hospital. So I slept outside 16 of 30 days in June. I started going back to AA meetings and called many members for support. The fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous proved to be both my family and my friends.

When I returned to Toronto I learned many things and confirmed that my acceptance into Toronto Film School was still active. My health care team was still in contact throughout my ordeals in my relapsed state. My sponsors were so supportive and helpful encouraging me to return to AA meetings. So I did and after 3 weeks I began to feel better.

I lost my housing and clothing and yes I am homeless in Toronto and starting over. My health is still intact. I know that the Creator (God) of my understanding will provide me with food, shelter and clothing. I need to be a lot more calm, cool and collected. I know the program of Alcoholics Anonymous will help me to achieve this by doing the steps. When I think I am really down I am reminded of H.A.L.T. am I Hungry, Angry, Lonely and/or Tired? If so, there are easy solutions, the rest of the solutions I can look for in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Yours truly, Dallas

WHO'S TO BLAME? Want to be emotionally healthy? STOP BLAMING OTHERS!!

Rarely do I say. "You made me angry!" "You make me sad!" "You hurt me!" Instead, I **accept** personal responsibility for my emotional health. I **accept** my feelings because no one has the power to make me feel anything. I do that ! The delusion that I have control over others, must be smashed before I can begin to work on myself.

These statements may seem extreme however there is no greater freedom in knowing that I have the power to choose how to react. I cannot give my power to any person, situation or thing whatsoever that has the potential to upset me because today I **accept** responsibility for ALL of my feelings not just some of them. Emotional intelligence is like emotional serenity. The more I practice not blaming, the more I take ownership of my behaviour in all matters and this transcends to serenity! Do I want to keep that? HELL YEAH!!

Awareness is the first line of defence because I must first become aware of when I am doing it; it being giving over my power to a person, situation or thing whatsoever. What follows this awareness is a new understanding that blaming anyone for my emotional wellness is insane because no one can make me feel any kind of way. I can own my emotional life by knowing there is no permanence to any emotion(s). My feelings come and go like the wind. They are not who I am. Life is an experience and I am the one experiencing it, I must remember this.

When I know this, I will be less likely to blame anyone and move quickly to the solution which is looking inward, no longer lashing outward. Over the years, I have come to realize that whenever I feel restless or down, it was because I was not taking responsibility for some part of my life, actions or thinking, always me not them.

I had to learn this the hard way, today I look at responsibility as an opportunity to move closer to my dreams and to live my best life,,,HAPPY JOUYOUS AND FREE! With this **acceptance** of responsibility, I no longer fear it, rather I embrace it. **Mary M., Erin Mills Group**





**TO DONATE AA/GTA ARCHIVAL ITEMS TO THE GTA ARCHIVES PLEASE
CONTACT THE GTA ARCHIVIST EDDY G. at 416-536-7536
OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE NEEDED FOR THE GTA ARCHIVES**

1. **Sept. 1935** Bill W. returned home from his Akron trip and AA began in New York City?
2. **Sept. 5th 1935** Hank P. the New York Group's AA No. 2 (Story in Big Book "The Unbeliever") takes his last drink? 1939 after 4 years of sobriety, Hank P. goes back to drinking.
3. **Sept. 13, 1937** Florence R. (story in 1st edition Big Book "A Feminine Victory") is the first female AA in New York? She helped Fitz M. start Washington Group. Returned to drinking died apparent suicide in Washington D.C.
4. **Sept. 21, 1938** Bill W. & Hank P. form Works Publishing Co. to raise money to write & publish Alcoholics Anonymous, AA's "Big Book"?
5. **Sept. 1938** Fitz M. (AA No. 8 & story in Big Book "Our Southern Friend") sister Agnes lends Bill W. & Hank P. \$1,000.00 to help get them through the Big Book project? Also Charles Towns lends Bill & Hank \$2,500.
6. **Sept. 1939** Liberty Magazine runs "Alcoholics and God" a story on AA by Morris Markey (who was influenced to write the article by Charles Towns)?
7. **Sept. 1940** the Journal of Nervous & Mental Disease reviewed the AA Big Book and said "of the inner meaning of alcoholism there is hardly a word"?
8. **Sept. 22, 1944** Dr. George Little transferred the distribution rights which he had obtained in Aug. 1942 for the sale of the Big Book in Canada to the Toronto AA Club.
9. **Sept. 1948** the first issue of the AA Grapevine in pocketbook format is published?
10. **Sept. 1948** in this issue of the Grapevine the Serenity Prayer was first printed?
11. **Sept 17, 1954** Bill D. AA No. 3 "Man on the Bed" dies? He had 19 years of sobriety.
12. **Sept. 17, 1957** Re: Archives: Bill Wilson wrote "It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way there can be no substantial distortion"?
13. **Sept. 1973** archives was established at GSO in New York & Nell Wing, one of Bill's earliest secretaries became the first archivist?
14. **Sept. 19, 1975** Jack Alexander, author of early Saturday Evening Post articles on AA dies? The March 1941 article creates national sensation: AA membership will quadruple in one year from 2,000 to 8,000.
15. **Sept. 9, 1982** Meetings of the six DCM's (today 8 Districts in the GTA) from around the Metropolitan Toronto Area & the Operating Committee (today the Executive Committee) of Toronto Intergroup started? Today these meetings are

80 YEAR BOOK: THE HISTORY OF A.A. IN ONTARIO 1943-2023

The GTA (Greater Toronto Area) Archives Committee is putting together a history of 80 years of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ontario to update the 50 Year Book which was printed in 1993.

It is financed through the committees' contributions and supported by GTA Intergroup, who have allocated funding for the initial printing. We will repay them from the sales of the book.

We are hoping that it will be the definitive history to date, will provide valuable information to A.A. members and be a reference for future A.A. historians.

In order to be successful, we need the support of Area and District archivists, and the membership across the province. We are reaching out to Areas 83, 84, 85 and 86 and all the Districts. If you would like to be included, please tell us in writing how A.A. came to the first home or location in your town or city.

Many do not realize that Archives is 12 Step work, and we will attempt to explain the link back to Bill, Dr. Bob and tell the story of how A.A. reached out from Akron to all parts of Ontario. We are basing our historical evolution on when the first meeting was held in a home, town or city.

If you think you know someone who should be contacted, please feel free to pass this on and ask for their assistance.

Thank you in advance for your help,

David T. GTA Archives Chair

dgt20july71@gmail.com 613-868-9243

AUGUST 2019 & UP TO SEPTEMBER 15th 2019

NAME	YEARS	DRY DATE	GROUP	MEDALLION
Andrew A.	15	Jul. 31 2004	Mount Royal - York Discussion Group	Aug. 6 2019
Bob T.	5	Jul. 14 2014	Traditional Group	Aug. 9 2019
Lynda M.	1	Aug. 8 2018	Erin Mills Group	Aug. 12 2019
Lawrence M.	1	Jul. 18 2018	Prince Edward Group	Aug. 12 2019
Ray C.	10	Aug. 13 2009	Westmoreland Group	Aug. 13 2019
Katie R.	10	Jul. 14 2009	Morning Discussion Group	Aug. 18 2019
Bradley M.	1	Aug. 13 2018	Birds of a Feather Group	Aug. 18 2019
Connie H.	10	Aug. 16 2009	Prince Edward Group	Aug. 19 2019
Danielle B.	5	Aug. 18 2014	Prince Edward Group	Aug. 19 2019
Gagan S.	20	Aug. 18 1999	Erin Mills Group	Aug. 19 2019
Zach R.	1	Aug 12 2018	Friendly Group	Aug. 19 2019
Peter G.	25	Aug. 15 1994	Anniversary Group	Aug. 21 2019
George K.	15	Aug. 17 2004	Kipling Group	Aug. 22 2019
Mary K.	5	Aug. 14 2014	Prince Edward Group	Aug. 26 2019
Steve S.	10	Aug. 17 2009	Glenhome Group	Aug. 26 2019
Jill B.	5	Aug. 22 2014	Sisters In Sobriety	Aug. 28 2019
Megan L.	1	Aug. 21 2018	Anniversary Group	Aug. 28 2019
Frank T.	40	Aug. 30 1979	Saturday Night Live (Newmarket)	Aug. 31 2019
Chris Z	10	Aug. 31 2009	Port Credit Group	Aug. 31 2019
Linda B.	1	Sep. 4 2018	Morning Discussion Group	Sep. 7 2019
Troy M.	1	Sep. 4 2018	Morning Discussion Group	Sep. 7 2019
Sebastian F.	1	Aug. 19 2018	Prince Edward Group	Sep. 9 2019
Dora Mae M.	40	Sep. 8 1979	Golden Mile Group	Sep. 11 2019
Dave L.	40	Sep. 22 1979	Golden Mile Group	Sep. 25 2019
Roy R.	35	Sep. 24 1984	Kipling Group	Sep. 26 2019

Step 8



We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all



Step 9

We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others



Hamilton & Districts
**51st Annual
 Autumn Leaf Roundup**

Friday & Saturday
 September 20th - 21st, 2019

**"Together
 We Can"**

NEW LOCATION!
 SHERATON
 HAMILTON HOTEL

**TICKETS AVAILABLE
 ONLINE**

autumnleaffoundup.org

Sheraton Hamilton Hotel
 116 King Street West
 Hamilton, ON. L8P 4V3

Banquet - \$60.00* Basic Registration - \$25.00*
*Prices subject to a small service fee

Full Al-Anon Program

Friday Opening
 AA Speaker
 Karl M.
 From
 Covina
 California

Closing AA
 Banquet Speaker
 Don M.
 From
 Louisville
 Kentucky



23rd Annual Mississauga Fall Roundup
Saturday October 5th 2019
 Vic Johnston Community Centre Banquet Hall
 335 Church Street Mississauga Ontario

Rigorously Honest
Featured Speakers:
 AA Speaker: Adam T. from Los Angeles, California
 AA Speaker: Jennifer K. from Plano, Texas
 AA Speaker: Steven P. from Peterborough Ontario
 Al-Anon Rick J. from Oakville, Ontario
 Alateen Speaker: TBA

- Plenty of free parking
- Close to Streetsville GO
- Accessible by Transit

8 AM - Registration & Coffee
 9 AM - Program Starts
 3 PM - Program Ends

Tickets are \$20 and will be sold at various groups and online by
 sending an email to mississaugafallroundup@gmail.com

TICKETS WILL NOT BE SOLD AT THE DOOR

Morning Timbits, Coffee, Tea all day and Hot and Cold Buffet Lunch included

50/50 draw tickets will be sold at the event
 Go to www.MississaugaFallRoundUp.org for more information

**"Life Begins
 Each Morning"**

**DISTRICT 19 8TH ANNUAL
 Archives
 Breakfast**

SUNDAY OCTOBER 20, 2019

Doors Open : 8:00am
 Buffet Breakfast : 8:45am
 Location : Burlington Holiday Inn
 3063 Service Road
 Guelph Line & GEW
 Ticket : \$20



SPEAKER • DOOR PRIZES • 50/50 DRAW

**TWELVE
 TRADITIONS
 WORKSHOP**

The Toronto Intergroup invites you to join us for a constructive day

September 21st 2019
 Meet and Greet at 9 am
 Workshop start 9:45 am close 3 pm

Lansing United Church
 49 Bogert Avenue
 North York M2N 1K4

Panelists will share their experiences on the importance of the
 Twelve Traditions in preserving AA's Unity and Singleness of purpose.

- 7th Tradition event- all are welcome
- Refreshment and light lunch will be served
- Church entrance on Bogert Ave.
- Rsvp to Alexx at Intergroup office 416-487-8110

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.

Scarborough District 22
41th Annual Service Day

Joy of Service

Saturday September 14th, 2019

9:30 am to 3:30 pm

Oakridge Community Centre

63 Pharmacy Avenue

(East of Victoria Park Station)

Ample Free Parking Available
Fully Accessible & Signers Welcome

**GUEST SPEAKERS & PANELS
FELLOWSHIP, FREE LUNCH, COFFEE**

Information on How to Get Active in AA Service

Treatment Facilities • Corrections • Accessibility • Grapevine
Archives • Self-Support • Public Information
Co-operation with the Professional Community

In the evening we will be hosting a

SOCIAL GATHERING WITH DJ

8:00 pm - 12:00 am

Tickets \$10.00 - Available From Your Group GSR
or email: D22ServiceDay2019

With summer drawing to a close and a bit cooler weather invigorating us, it will soon be time for Scarborough District 22 to hold their annual Service Day on Saturday, September 14th (poster to the left)

My life has been infinitely enriched by the many wonderful members I have met in service. I would probably not have met them due to the distances that normally separate us. By sharing a common purpose, as the result of a spiritual way of life, it was inevitable that we would meet. Cross One alcoholic still talking to another, getting out of self. I have found that by simply being willing to be of service to others. problems that I might have felt stuck on, lifted, because of my change of focus.

We don't have to do it all perfectly though. I once heard a member say that spirituality doesn't demand perfection; shame does. If I am trapped in obsessively trying to attain some perfect ideal, about all I can guarantee is that I will fall short. It's the "perfect" breeding ground for negative self-talk. However, just admit that we're not perfect, and go a little bit easier on ourselves.

Progress rather than perfection. Easy does it, but do it. One day at a time. Greeter at the door, you might be the only Big Book that newcomer's ever seen before. Yes, it's about stopping drinking, but the program also helps with my thinking. It's a "we" program. I had a sponsor who said that the only thing we can do alone is drink. For everything else we need to be involved with others in recovery. Joy in service! A problem shared is a problem halved.

I wish I was clever enough to have come up with some of these nuggets o' wisdom. But that's not the case. Saved my life. Learned how to laugh again!

Tom S., on behalf of District 22 Service Day Committee

GROUP SPOTLIGHT— Royal York Group

The Royal York Group of Alcoholics Anonymous is a balance of long-timers and mid-rangers with a healthy batch of newcomers totaling about 50 members. Nestled in an affluent pocket just north of Eglinton Avenue in the west end of Toronto.

Open meetings are held on Tuesday evenings at 8pm., closed discussion on Thursdays at 8pm. There is also a Big Book Study at 6.45pm at St. Matthias Church 1428 Royal York Road.

The group is active in both District 12, Area 83 and Toronto Intergroup. Business meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of the month quarterly.

The group was formed by a handful of people on May 24th 1977. Names like Art E., Tom L., Joe B., Dorothy M., Larry "Rabbi" S. and none other than AA Circuit Speaker Frank Orsini. Larry S. has been with the Royal York Group 42 years and can still be found in the kitchen every Tuesday.

Long timer Dale K. joined RYG after 20 years in other groups. Why did she choose Royal York? She said, "I found there was great respect and equanimity between the men and women. Dale celebrated 53 years of sobriety recently.

The hand painted slogans were repurposed by member Joe B. from a group that disbanded. They were recently refurbished via John H. The original table dressing is also still used. Steady and reliable and welcoming can all be used to describe the Royal York Group where a friendly hand is extended from the moment you arrive.

The meeting is accessible for the handicapped with an elevator.

Peter McC. Toronto

