



BETTER TIMES masthead & wordsearch

BETTER TIMES is published monthly for AA members in the Greater Toronto Area.

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How To Reach Us: 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), by mail, fax or email. Only signed submissions with a means of contact will be accepted. For subscriptions call Alexx at 416-487-8110 or subscribe at: www.aatoronto.org

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Better Times publication strives to offer its readership the voice of the Toronto AA community. Your article submissions are a vital part of the Better Times publication and allow you to share your experience, strength and hope with your fellows.

Submissions should be between 200-500 words, and may be made online at www.aatoronto.org or by emailing bettertimes@aatoronto.org directly.

For any inquiries or comments, please send your name and phone number to the Editor at bettertimes@aatoronto.org. Your anonymity will be protected.

Yours in Service,
The Better Times Staff.

DON'T GET BAFFLED WORD SEARCH

C	X	A	G	N	B	H	R	C	I	Y	J	D	L	M	K	R	A	P	E	M	E	H	T
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AUGUST	FUN	POPSICLES
BEACH	HULA HOOPS	ROLLERCOASTER
BIKES	ICE CREAM	SANDALS
CAMPING	JULY	SPLASH
CARNIVAL	JUMPROPE	SPRINKLER
COOKOUTS	JUNE	SNOWCONES
FIREFLIES	MOVIES	SUNGLASSES
FIREWORKS	PARADES	SUNSCREEN
FISHING	PARTIES	SWIMMING
FLIPFLOPS	PICNICS	THEME PARK
	POOL	VACATION

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BETTER TIMES sharing

HOW I INCLUDE THE 7TH TRADITION IN MY LIFE AND ITS THEME OF FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Unquestionably, the 7th tradition is not a financial transaction, it is much more. A spiritual connection for a larger purpose. As I get more settled into Alcoholics Anonymous, a program of recovery, I have discovered the benefits of A.A.'s design for living, offering a hopeless alcoholic like myself, spiritual, emotional and financial stability. As a newcomer to the program I didn't understand the magnitude of the 7th and the impact that it would have in my life. In the beginning, I thought it was a business, taking advantage of people in misfortune, like a big company of some kind, without the basic understanding of what (fully self-supporting with our own contributions) meant. Through the traditions, I've found a better understanding of the value of money - I have found financial independence, and the absolute value for a spiritual connection through contribution.

As an alcoholic, my finances were in total chaos. I never appreciated the value of money. I started working when I was 12 years old which is about the same time I started drinking. I had plans and dreams but they were seized by the mismanagement of funds. Being an alcoholic took a toll on my finances, my entire life and the life of my family. I was confident I would be able to pay back my debt but my alcoholism had other plans.

When I started working with a sponsor, he suggested to always contribute to the basket. It didn't matter how much it was, it was a symbol for a commitment towards the program. It was an accountability that I had lost in my disease. My sponsor, based on the principles of the 7th tradition, told me clearly that I wasn't buying my sobriety but making a spiritual investment in financial matters. My finances are not the best, but they sure are better than they were when I was out drinking my life away. I feel more stable physically, emotionally and financially. I do have a budget for the 7th which is sacred to me.

I do not directly know the impact of the spiritual and bigger purpose that my contribution will bring into my life and others. All of this reveals itself to me through the guidance, suggestions and example of people in the program. The 7th keeps the meetings open, more newcomers come and they realize the freedom that comes by practicing the three legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I have found freedom from an obsession of the mind that no human power could ever restore. I reconnected to a Higher Power, myself, my family and society that makes sure I am cared for, if I continue working this program. Gratitude will be forever in my soul for this program and everyone in it!

Jose H. (Love and Tolerance Group, Toronto)

The Concepts

Creative Writers Take Note:
Share your valuable opinion with us
Seldom Discussed Often Forgotten
So Important Yours to Write About
Tackle The Concepts
bettertimes@aatoronto.org
Concept Corner in the subject line

Before the 12 Steps were written the Four Absolutes - taken from the Oxford Group - were followed.
Honesty Purity Unselfishness Love
Dr. Bob Resting Place

that on July 3, 1955 in St. Louis The Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity & Service were turned over to the AA movement by its oldtimers?

BETTER TIMES

medallions & sharing

MEDALLIONS - Past and Upcoming - Name - Year - Celebration Date											
Eddy G.	30	Beaches	May 16	Louise M.	5	Markland Wood	June 1	Richard K	5	The Hill	July 6
Rich G.	10	Fifth Tradition	May 23	Rosemary R	15	Willowdale	June 1	David W	40	James Bond	July 9
Laura M	25	Thornhill Group	May 24	Manuel L.	25	Portuguese	June 15	Cheryl B	1	Morning Discussion	July 16
Maureen K.	1	Willowdale	May 25	George E	5	Willowdale	June 15	Sergio M	25	Six Points Group	July 17
Corinne S.	1	Willowdale	May 25	Jim V	5	New Anchor Group	June 22	Bryan T	5	Agincourt Acorn	July 18
Cailin M	1	Spiritual Kindergarten	May 26	Anna Maria R	5	East York Group	June 27	John S	1	Agincourt Acorn	July 25
Jacqueline H	25	St. Clements	May 31	Paula D	25	Markland Wood	June 29	Bill V	1	King City Group	Aug 7
John W	40	St. Clements	May 31	Kenn C	10	Beyond Belief Agnostics	July 6	Patricia A	15	Frontrunners	Aug 12
Laura F	1	St. Clements	May 31	Tanya E	1	New Anchor Group	July 6				

Due to ongoing submissions this list may not be current. For the latest information visit: www.aatoronto.org



I have always enjoyed a good Step Group. The last Step Group I participated in was 14 years ago. I hosted the group on Monday nights in my apartment. The group was 16 females. The youngest was 18 and the oldest about 55, and we were all in AA.

The Step Study was The 12 Steps - A Way Out – a spiritual process for healing – By Friends In Recovery. It is a workbook style step study with a fill in the blanks workbook. At the end you really feel like you did a thorough job and left nothing out.

I had a personal need for this step study because after 6 months of sobriety, I still felt different from other people. I wondered if feeling different was making me feel phony. Was I acting phony or being honest? I felt as though I was being myself but still holding back parts of me from other people. Could I show my true self to others and then see myself for what I was?

I reviewed the things I valued. On the upside, I believed in giving 100 percent but the downside was that I may have been too much of a people pleaser. I believed in optimism but was I using jokes and laughter to cover something up and hide deeply buried pain? Pain I needed to get out if I was to get better.

I pray. My prayers are short – mostly thanks and gratitude. I've been aware of my Higher Power all my life. I could not identify with the God presented to me in the beginning and I never knew what spirituality meant. No one told me. I prayed in despair because my dad didn't love me. He kept my mom near to him and on his side. My brother used consistently from an early age and was not present in my life. I thought there was something wrong with me.

During the sharing times I reviewed people who let me down. I

had kept my grudges towards them and nurtured each one. After showing my mistakes to people in the group, I suddenly woke up. Many people I thought let me down never did. It was me who put the bar out of their reach. I also allowed them, at times, to place my bar out of my reach. My false pride made me think I could do anything. I don't do that so much anymore.

Four girls dropped out of the group. The girls dropped out because they felt they couldn't share with other girls in the group – and that is the purpose of the group: to share. If you can't share don't go to a personal step study group.

So my final realization from this step group was that I expected too much of myself and others. If I didn't like something or someone I put up with it anyway to make them happy – and that was my need to be perfect and also thinking myself not worthy. I needed to get real and stop trying too hard so I could take care of myself. Now, I try to see things as they really are and stop minimizing and maximizing. I try not to see things as I would like them to be, or imagine them to be. I try to stop losing focus so as not to create chaos.

I have learned to be happy when things are simple. I need peace of mind so I won't be compelled to cover myself up with unnecessary thoughts. Lastly, I deal with my false pride. I listen to feedback and accept it. Not feel I am above it or below it. These are my notes from the first 3 weeks of my step study group. I recommend opening your home to a small group to study the steps in depth. I am still good friends with many of these women. We shared a great deal more in those 16 weeks than what would have been shared simply at meetings. It was a good safe atmosphere to step out of the box.

Patricia A, Frontrunners and 12th Tradition

BETTER TIMES

editorial

A Letter from the Editor

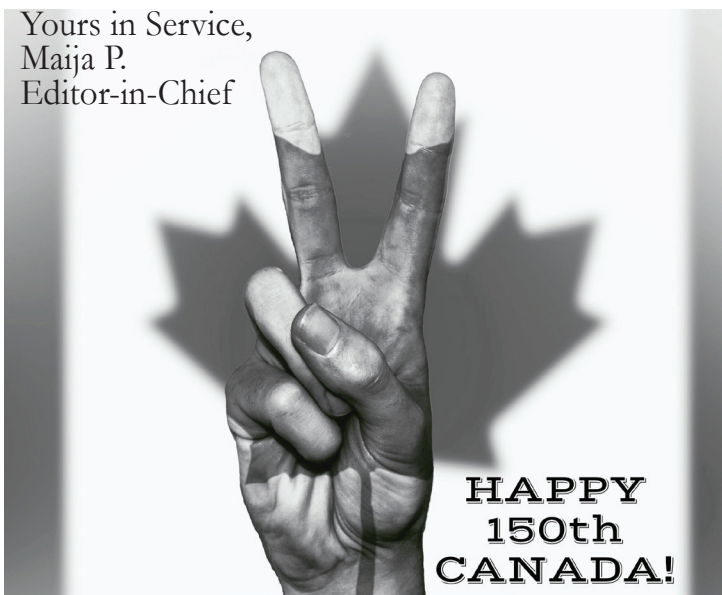
First let me start by wishing you all a Happy Canada Day! Our beautiful country is 150 years old so let's all raise a glass of whatever alcohol free beverage quenches our thirst and celebrate “our true north strong and free” this July 1st and through the year.

Another inspirational anniversary we will be hearing about for the next little while is the 75 Years of A.A in Ontario & the theme of the 2018 ORC “The Road of Happy Destiny”. Next year's committee is busy behind the scenes already preparing for another great weekend. In partnership with the conference, Better Times will be proudly dedicating a section of the paper to the ORC every month. From snippets of history and committee introductions to fun facts and service opportunities, BT will keep you ‘in the know’ until March 2018.

We have a wonderfully packed issue this July, the month of humility and self-sufficiency as seen in Step and Tradition Seven of our program. Could I be throwing another toonie in the basket each week on behalf of the newcomer who is possibly just getting back on their feet? I could. Am I humbly asking for assistance in removing my shortcomings on a daily basis or do my actions reflect the “next right thing” for me? Heavy questions? Yes. Necessary for my sobriety? You bet.

Have a wonderful July folks!

Yours in Service,
Maija P.
Editor-in-Chief



Bill W Quotes

From the tables at the London Archives Breakfast

(Thank you to Gord for providing transportation in an RV)

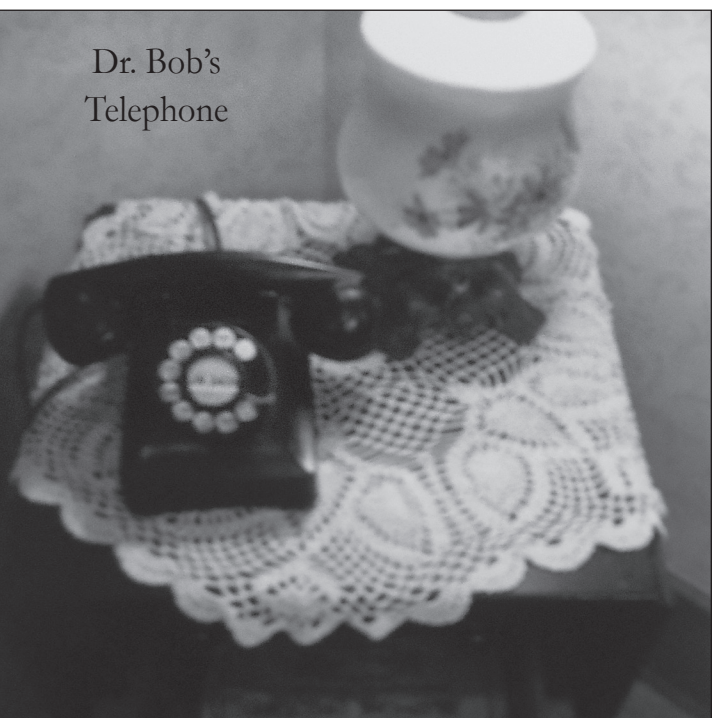
“A Big Book that is falling apart is generally owned by someone who isn't.”

“In God's Economy nothing is wasted. Through failure we learn a lesson in humility, which is probably needed, painful though it is.”

“Honesty with ourselves and others gets us sober, but it is tolerance that keeps us this way.”

“Because of our kinship in suffering our channels of contact have always been charged with the language of the heart.”

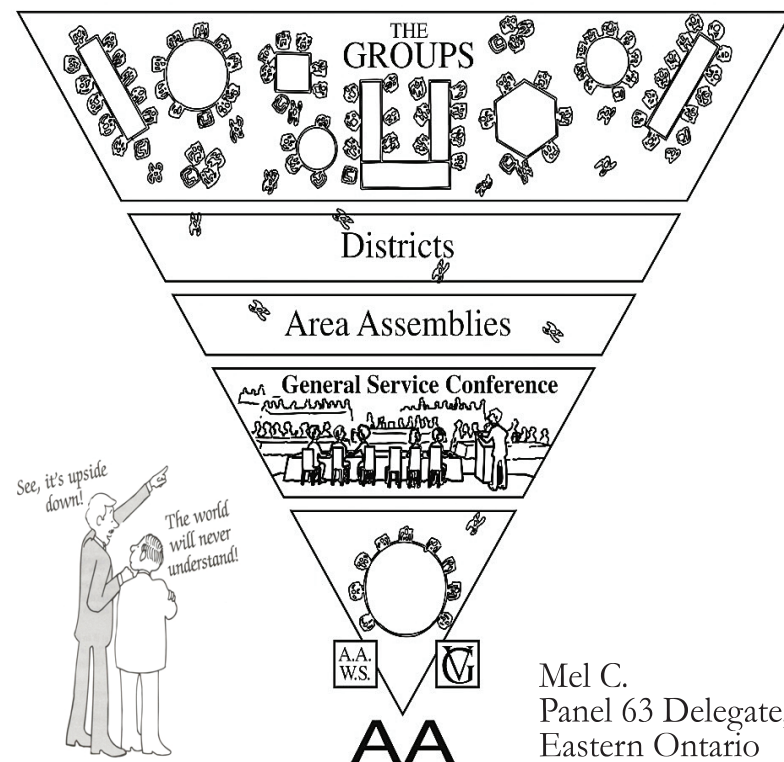
“I try to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heartbeat must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion we can ever know.”



concepts corner

"Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship."

Our Bill could simply not stop writing, nor caring about his baby, which by 1962 had become a fairly precocious young adult! The miracle of the Steps followed by the marvel of the Traditions brought into being an entity quite unlike any that had gone before. How was this fledgling fellowship, relying ultimately on spiritual principles for its success, to organize on a grand scale so that it could effectively relate itself to a world of normies and at the same time provide internal guidance for the quirky sentiments of its rotating leadership? We needed organizational principles that would be true to our ideals as well as effective in our growth. Bill saw the Steps working in our personal lives, the Traditions binding our Groups and he wrote the Concepts to help our trusted servants operate a model of self-government that recognized our unique construction. Amazing that even after 27 years of



Mel C.
Panel 63 Delegate,
Eastern Ontario

DID YOU KNOW?
that on June 30 - July 3, 2005 the 70th Anniversary International Convention was held in Toronto with over 44,000 in attendance? 1st city to get it twice.

existence, Bill never lost sight of the fact that our success came from our singleness of purpose and our upside-down triangle structure. Street-level AA's and their groups were in charge and had to have the final say in whatever we did, inside or outside the organization. Concept 1 enshrines that principle. Though impossible to guess Bill's mind, it seems obvious that the first thing that came to him when designing the principles which would guide our General Service Conference would be the idea that we are a fellowship, committed to living our lives rightly, and that together we will find right solutions for the challenges that face us and the decisions that need to be made. Not run by an all-powerful leader or potentate, we're a group of drunks trying to do the right thing. Bill called our organization "a spiritualized society characterized by enough enlightenment, enough responsibility, and enough love of man and of God to ensure that our democracy of world service will work". And work it has. Brilliantly. Concept 1 tells us we are self-governing.

* (http://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-8_thetwelveconetps.pdf permission per the copyright guidelines of A.A. GSO)

Thank you Mel for your perspective and becoming our first Concept Corner contributor!

New hours for the Church Street Group Meetings

Please note that as of July 8, 2017 the Saturday open meetings of the

Church Street Group will be held from 10:30 to 11:30 am.

The Sunday meetings hours do not change and remain 12:30 to 1:30 pm.



info/events/archives

DID YOU KNOW?
that in July 1962 Grapevine Editor Jack M. creates Victor E., now an AA icon.



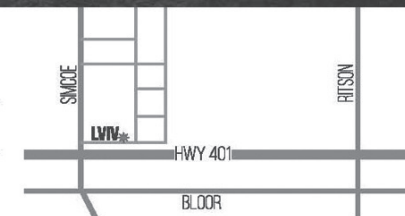
45th ANNUAL
LAKESHORE
DISTRICTS
CONFERENCE
AUG 11, 12, 13 2017

INFORMATION
AND TICKETS

ONLINE! LDC2017.WEEBLY.COM
OR LAKESHORE INTERGROUP 905.728.1020

NEW VENUE!
LVIV HALL, 38 LVIV BLVD, OSHAWA
(JUST OFF SIMCOE, 1 BLOCK
NORTH OF BLOOR)

GUEST SPEAKERS & PANELISTS
POTLUCK LUNCH
SATURDAY BANQUET DINNER
SUNDAY 'SOBRIETY COUNTDOWN'



**OCTOBER IS
GRATITUDE MONTH
CONTEST!**

SEEKING STORIES OF GRATITUDE...
YOUR ESSAY COULD BE ON THE
FRONT PAGE OF THE
NOVEMBER ISSUE.
EMAIL YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO
BETTERTIMES@AATORONTO.ORG
BY SEPTEMBER 20TH, 2017!!

**I FOUND IT IN
THE ARCHIVES**

Archives Committee meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month in the boardroom at the GTA Intergroup Office, 234 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 202, Toronto.

75 Years of A.A. in Ontario Commemorative Booklet

The GTA (Greater Toronto Area) Archives Committee has been asked by the 2018 ORC Committee, to put together a small booklet to help celebrate the 75th anniversary of the start of A.A. in Ontario and the first ORC. We have been asked to include a brief description of how A.A. came to various cities across Ontario. Emails have been sent out to Area 83 Archives Chairs & DCM's and Archives Chairs & Archivists in Ontario asking if they would like to be included and to please tell us in a couple of paragraphs how A.A. came to your city.

We need this by July 31 2017

BACK TO THE REPOSITORY... with GTA Archivist Eddy G.

RECENT ITEMS DONATED TO THE GTA ARCHIVES

- 1- The AA Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts For World Service 1985-86 Edition and 1- Souvenir Album 1944-1994 "AA 50 Years A New Lease On Life" Quebec Southwest Area 87 booklet. Donated by Steps To Serenity Group.
- 1-Metal Bell engraved Mar 3 1977 St. Joseph's Meeting. Donated by Sal P. (Trial & Error Group).
- 10 pages Eventide Group - Open meeting format & readings, business meeting minutes and - a 1960 photo of St. Anselm's Church. Donated by Patricia A. (Front Runners Group).
- 1-Meeting in a Pocket (2"x 3") booklet 22 pages of various readings printed by Birds of a Feather Group.
- 3-Celebration of the Life of Kaye Hopkins programs, business card, lyrics to "A Lady Name Kaye" by Gregg & Michael O'H. & - a red round ball for nose. Kaye passed away on April 12th she was 95 years old with 63 years of sobriety and was a member of the Mount Albert Group. Kaye was a great member of AA and a power of example. She will be missed.

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

The book "50 Years The History of AA in Ontario" is for sale at the Literature Department at 234 for \$10.00.

This book was produced in 1993 by the Archives Committee of Toronto Intergroup (today GTA Intergroup).

It's a great gift to give to a member on their anniversary.

OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE NEEDED FOR THE GTA ARCHIVES

