



NO LONGER ALONE

**Ontario Regional Conference
of Alcoholics Anonymous**

March 11, 12 & 13, 2016

Fairmont Royal York Hotel, Toronto

Still

Are you still quitting drinking, still leaving your wife
Still cursing God for a still failing life
Still can't listen still fighting the fight
Still not letting go with all your might
Is nothing right still best you can do
And is a chatter in your head still keeping
everything all about you

Well here's what I did when I was still you
I did exactly what I was told to do.

Like with a sponsor I did steps 1, 2 and 3
Peeling the onion made it easier to see
That steps 4 and 5 could be the breakthrough
Making 6 to 10 less frightening to do
11 and 12 was like going back to school
To once again learn the golden rule
That maybe just maybe it might be God's will
That I strive for a calm and arrive at perfectly still.

Marc B.
Yorkville & Spiritual Kindergarten Groups



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*The spiritual awakening I have enjoyed as the result of working the Steps
is the awareness that I am no longer alone.*

A.A. DAILY REFLECTIONS

masthead & service

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

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Opinions expressed in **BETTER TIMES** are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Greater Toronto Area Intergroup.

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.

Jobs & Notices...

■ ORC 2016 needs volunteers as greeters, registration, etc. Website is online!

■ Info AA Day 2016 will be held May 28th, 2016

■ Volunteers are needed for both Phone Greeters (1 year of continuous sobriety and 1 phone training session required) and 12 Step List (especially women and speakers of languages other than English)

■ Access Ability Committee seeking members for a "Buddy List" for members who are homebound or otherwise can't access meetings

■ Twelfth Step Committee seeking secretary and volunteers

■ Correctional Facilities seeking people for "Bridging the Gap" program

■ The Communications Committee (Better Times, Website, etc.) continues to seek two or three dedicated members to help us carry the message of recovery in print and online. If interested, please email communications@aatoronto.org. We'd be delighted to welcome you!

NOTICE:

Eglinton Crosstown construction is at the block which includes 234. Parking in the area will be further restricted and it is being suggested that anyone coming to the Intergroup Office leave plenty of time or take public transportation.

Communications Committee is seeking volunteers for the following:

Helpers to assist with managing and updating the website once it is back online.
Training videos are forthcoming!

The Communications Committee (Better Times, Website, etc.) continues to seek two or three dedicated members to help us carry the message of recovery in print and online. If interested, please email communications@aatoronto.org. We'd be delighted to welcome you!

ALSO:

We are no longer using the bteditor@aatoronto.org email address. Please send all correspondence to bettertimes@aatoronto.org. If you've sent any articles for consideration, comments, or questions to the old address over the last two months, please resend.

Thank you!

TO CONTACT COMMITTEES PLEASE EMAIL:

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Ontario Regional Conference: orc@aatoronto.org

Public Information: publicinfo@aatoronto.org

Twelfth Step: twelfthstep@aatoronto.org

editorial & sharing

Thoughts From the Editor's Desk

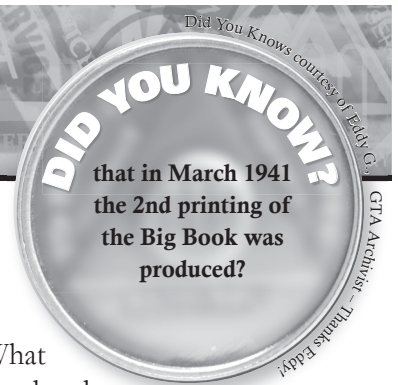
I made many a decision in my illustrious drinking career. Some decisions were easy to follow through on: beer instead of whiskey, wait till 2PM for the first drink (sleeping in until noon helped), crawl to the bed so as not to pass out on the floor... Others were much more challenging: take a day or two break from drinking, stop for good this time, tell the truth to my family and friends. Decisions came easy, at times fast and furious, often powered by a seeming unshakable resolve only to be torn asunder by the obsession and compulsion to drink and use again. The follow-through was the tricky part.

When I came into AA and saw Step 3 on the walls, I was daunted by the idea of not only making a decision that I would have to follow through on, but by the elusive concept of turning my will and life over to a God that I didn't

understand, much less have any kind of connection to. What would be left of me if I surrendered completely? A slave? A brainwashed religious zealot? A glaze-eyed cult member?

Of course, none of these things had any basis in reality and in time, I began to see that the step actually reads "to the care of God." I had lots of practice surrendering to the *care* of a bottle, my friends, the streets, hospitals...so it wasn't too much of a stretch for me to turn my thoughts and actions to the care of something greater - at first a treatment centre, next my home group and sponsor, and finally the loving Presence that rests deep within us all.

Marc S. - Editor-in-Chief (bettertimes@aatoronto.org)



The Matrix of Support

I wanted to start this article by telling you, the reader, that I joined AA almost 12 years ago, on March 19th, 2004....But then the honest truth kicked in. I first joined AA in 1995, and left after a year, hating you all and thinking you were losers. I didn't need AA.

At first, I stayed sober and clean and my life sailed. New job, new partner, finished renovating my house and my friendships were thriving. Three years later, I went to a workshop on Harm Reduction about assessing risk once you had a year of abstinence: zero, low, moderate and high.

Hey, I can do that, I thought. I picked up my first drink a few months later. Low risk to start, with no more than 1 drink at a time, up to four times a week. Then moderate risk: no more than 2 drinks at a time with maximum 12 drinks a week. But I wanted more, more, more until I finally fell into the arms of alcohol, my best friend, my sweetest lover and my most joyful connection, with a fervor and a fear that astonished me.

You can guess what happened. A year later I was sitting alone in my living room drinking straight from the bottle, lonely and fearful. My relationship had ended, my job was at risk, my house was falling apart around me and I had lost most of my friends.

I crawled in to AA again, angry, full of shame and blame at life, at you, and worst of all at myself. AA members created a presence of caring and support that I skittered around at

first, and then began to lean in to with gratitude. I found a loving sponsor who walked with me through the 12 steps with dedication. I mourned deeply when she died 4 years ago.

Today, I work the program daily, because when I don't, old thinking slips in and I become negative and critical. Using steps 10 to 12 carves out a place for me to land when I have ordinary life problems or when a tragedy shocks me. I have learned how to lean in to this graceful program that is rooted in love. I open my heart to love through an ongoing daily surrender to my Higher Power. I've learned to love myself, forgive my behaviour and build integrity. And now the arms of AA members hold me, and my Higher Power is my most joyful connection.

Today, I look for ways that I can give back to others. I am just beginning to pay forward what all the women and men have done when they reached out their hands and hearts when I stepped into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, filled with fear and anger. Now, I live a sweet and often joyous life, steeped in the vibrating, living matrix of connection that members offer when you step into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Susan Y., Kingston Young People's Group

women in recovery

DID YOU KNOW?
that on
March 3-4, 1951
Bill W. spoke about the
proposed General Service
Conference at the
ORC held at the
Royal York Hotel?

A Woman in Recovery

As a binge drinker, I became completely insane whenever I imbibed. Each bender was worse than the last. After nine years it was like a cyclone and a forest fire had entered my life and razed it to the ground. The fire ensured there would be no salvageable chunks of debris, just charred stalks of vegetation on the ground. I was done. The jig was up. Thank God I found the rooms.

As Dan Quayle, the notorious malapropist vice-presidential candidate, said: “the mind is a terrible thing to lose.” It’s not easy putting it back together again. The self-hatred, loss of confidence, shame, and horror at what we’ve done is very hard to face. Finding out who we really are underneath takes time and patience. Patience is giving things the time they need.

My family relative recently had a serious accident. His recovery will take a long time, and can’t be rushed. Cells need to regenerate, an organ needs to re-grow, and he needs a long period of physical rehabilitation. Conversely, in my first period

of sobriety, I tried to salvage all the broken things from my past quickly. I wanted back what I thought was a good life, the life before my troubles began. I had an untarnished reputation then, friends, a community, and some prospects. I know now that in that first state of sobriety I was wearing rose-colored glasses. It wasn’t really rosy at all in my old, pre-drunk life.

All that is to say I didn’t take a very good look at myself (Step 4), nor was I willing to change the things that were getting in the way of my progress (Steps 6 & 7). It took too long and I ‘went out’. This time I know I have to wait for re-growth, not try to resurrect old illusions. This time I am looking at new sprouts coming up from the ground. My recovery is about starting over again. It’s about having faith that what is truly mine will come back to me.

– Sarah H., Toronto

I Did Not Get Here Alone

I did not get here alone...such a small statement for the impact it has had in my life! I arrived at AA bankrupt in all areas of my life. I had lost everything and everyone I loved. I was sick, sorry and so ashamed of who I was, but still unwilling to admit that I needed help. I first came as a support to my father who I KNEW needed it, and I stayed because from that first nanosecond of peace I felt at that meeting, I wanted more.

I was afraid to believe that this time was different. I had tried everything I knew to get sober. I could stop for periods of time but was doomed to pick up that first drink again and lose everything as I had done countless times. I slowly began to put my life back together, however this deadly disease had damaged more than just myself— my relationship with my family was irreparable at that time. I lost everything, this time in sobriety! My kids ended up back in Children’s Aid, I lost my job, had to claim personal bankruptcy, and my boyfriend left all around the same time. I went to my meeting and called them a bunch of dirty rotten so and so’s.... I said, “you promised me my life would change and here it is exactly the same”! They embraced me and said, “just hang on...don’t let go...somewhere there will be an answer for you.”

I didn’t believe them, I had prayed to be a good mother and person, and I had failed at it all. God didn’t answer prayers.

When all those things were removed from my life I had time to go to countless meetings. I went to coffee shops and talked program for hours. I went to homes of members and

they came to mine, but the most important thing I did was work the 12 Steps and begin to recover. God DID answer my prayer — everything came back: the kids, the job, my finances got better, even that boyfriend came back and he should have stayed gone (be careful what you pray for) LOL.

I wasn’t promised a rose garden when I arrived, but I was promised that I would be able to face life on life’s terms, and people walked through it all with me...every step of the way.

I also heard, “if you’re new buckle up because recovery is a ride!”, and it sure has been. I have faced many adversities, the suicide of a family member, the death of a grandson and others, but there have been so many joys as well, a child who has never seen me drink, grandchildren and great-grandchildren who LOVE me, and sharing an international conference with my oldest son who carried in the Canadian flag and yelled, “hey Mom!!”

You have given me these wondrous gifts ...blessings beyond my belief. Through it all, the good and bad, I NEVER thought of a drink as a solution, and it is only because of this wonderful program and the people who walked through it all with me. The outcome? I will have the honour of celebrating my 40 year medallion at Birds of a Feather on April 3rd, 2016. Thank you ... is not enough ...Miigwetch.

– Rene T., Toronto

spotlight on

Love & Tolerance Group

When I came to Alcoholics Anonymous at a young age, I was already what some AAers call a “low bottom drunk”. Booze in any form had stopped working—worse, it was sending me to emergency rooms, psych wards, jail cells and paralyzing me with fear when I was alone.

Warren had a similar battle and had actually dived off the roof of an 8-storey building, been jailed and deported to Canada all as a result of alcoholism.

What we both experienced through sponsorship, going through the steps in the Big Book, being a part of an active group and working tirelessly to help others was miraculous transformation. We were free!

So in May 2010, when we had the inspiration to just see if there was a need for a Big Book based meeting where we talked about the steps and God as you understand Him without apology, we did what we had both been taught to do: listen.

What followed was the creation of The Love and Tolerance Meeting.

Everything fell into place with an ease that we had both come to identify as our Higher Power’s will. The church (Trinity St. Paul’s) only had space on Tuesday night, the night that there was no meeting in that pocket of the Annex. We took the room and paid for the first month, just to see what would transpire. We went home, meditated and then the format flowed out of us with ease, name and all. It just came.

We would read from the Big Book three pages at a time, the first 164 pages. We would invite a lead share to set the tone - someone who was experienced and could deliver a strong message of hope to the ‘man who was still sick’. This was to be followed by an open share, three minutes of silent meditation and close with the Lord’s

Prayer, as the first meetings of AA were closed.

Other details came—we would go around the room and introduce ourselves as an act of unity and to give everyone in the room their voice. We wanted the moment

of silence that traditionally opened the meeting to actually be a moment—a minute or so—to get still and focused. The closing was to be from page 84 of the Big Book, ending with, “Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code. And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone — even alcohol.”

The first open meeting took place Tuesday, June 1st, 2010. There were 12 people in all, including a man coming out of a blackout, brought by his desperate daughter. Jeff S. was our first lead share, an AA giant with 30+ years of sobriety. The feeling in the room was electric.

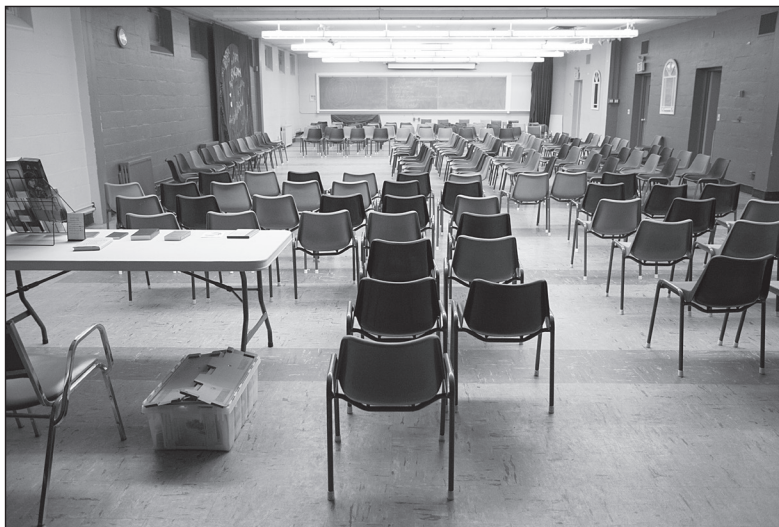
From that first meeting ‘L&T’ seemed to have a core group who agreed absolutely on a common solution, and shared a message of experience, strength and hope with sincerity and passion. We stayed late to talk to the newcomer and were quick to give out our numbers.

Our first business meeting that July had seven members. We elected positions and started to form group conscience. The meeting grew at an overwhelming pace. It seemed the common feedback was that despite the sweltering summer heat in the unairconditioned room, there was a powerful feeling that people loved. We felt it too.

When the group could afford it, we elected to create the closed meeting on Sundays. It was to be a Step 11 meeting where we read from the Daily Reflections, meditated for 10 minutes, had a quick lead and then open share. Again, people came!

The meeting, like any other, has had growing pains.

continued on back page



DID YOU KNOW?

that on March 1st, 1941
an article about AA & the
Big Book written by Jack
Alexander appeared in the
Saturday Evening Post?

HISTORY OF THE ONTARIO REGIONAL CONFERENCE NAME

**From 1943 to 1949 references to 'anniversary'
and 'conference' were used.**



1950 - the "A.A. Conference" name was used.



1951 - the "Regional Conference" name was used.



**1952 - the "Ontario A.A. Conference"
name was used.**



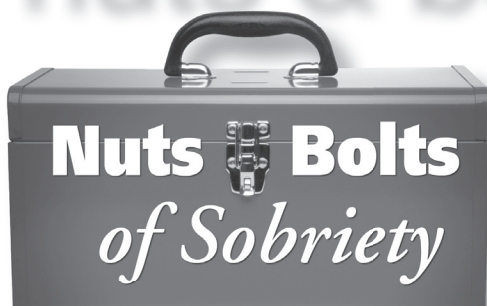
**1953 - the "Ontario Regional Conference"
name was used for the first time.**



Phone Greeter Training will take place at 234 Eglinton Ave. East, Suite 202 on

Sat., March 12, 10:30 am AND Sun., March 20, 1:30 pm

nuts & bolts



Step Three

Learning to 'Let Go and Let God'

Many years before I found recovery, I had the words “let it go” tattooed on my left inner wrist. My counselor in treatment laughed and said, “wow, your higher power was really trying to get that message through to you!”

Now 8 years into my recovery, every time I hear the twelve steps read out at meetings, I have a tendency to hear steps 3 and 11 as if they were meshed together. What I hear is, “Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood him, praying only for

the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.” Now don’t get me wrong, I am not saying I want to skip over the meat and potatoes of steps 4 through 10. It’s just that I like to think of my relationship to my higher power as the keystone (page 62) and cornerstone (page 47) of my program.

Let go and let god. It’s the third step slogan that many of us are familiar with. The problem for me with this slogan is that left to my own devices, I can’t let go of much. In order to let go of my stories and expectations, so I can allow my needs to be met (notice I said ‘needs’ not ‘wants’), I must have a relationship with a higher power. A wise sponsor showed me that I could choose a benevolent, forgiving and omnipotent higher power. Through working the steps, I developed that relationship and through the effort of constant conscious contact, that relationship has blossomed.

Today, I trust that everything is as it should be. Reading page 417 (or 449 depending on which edition you have), “And acceptance

is the answer to all my problems today . . .”

really helped in the early years. So did reading pages 60 (after the abc) through to 63 (step 3 prayer) in first person in order to remind myself that I am not running the show. “Thy will not mine be done” is a quick reminder I give myself throughout the day. I’ve learned, through trial and error, good sponsorship, and the program, to let God and let go—in that order.

The longer I stay in recovery, the more I realize that abstinence was but a mere beginning in my journey. The more I have become willing to allow a Higher Power to work in all areas of my life—not just the stopping of harmful substances and behaviours, the more emotional sobriety and ultimately peace of mind, I have found. Turns out that step three is the answer for me—again and again and again.

Forgiving Self

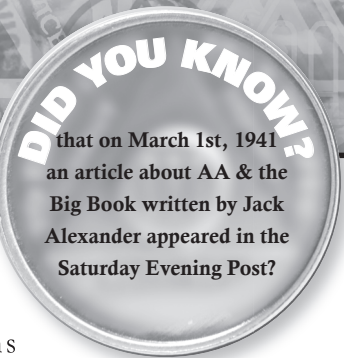
It seemed as though my Fourth Step had enough guilty substance to last several lifetimes. I have been told many times that the reason I felt guilty was because I was guilty. Very true! But then, I listened to people around the AA tables who described how they had forgiven themselves. Well, I had tried that from the first time I was released from a terrifying experience. I remember the Judge pointing his angry finger at me shouting: “You have disgraced your mother and father . . . I don’t feel sorry for you at all! Ninety days in the Indiana Penal farm.” There had been three drunken arrests in a row at age nineteen, yet luck was on my side; in finality I was released to the custody of my father, but wow, did I feel guilty! But for the sake of relief I found

reason to believe that I was a victim because the cops were always after me. It was not my fault! I seemed to forgive myself, but yet that annoying hole in my stomach only grew larger.

As my drunken misadventures continued throughout my twenties and thirties I would seek solace from my bar room buddies, and they would agree with me — I was just an unfortunate victim having bad luck. I believed that, too! Yet that cavity of the stomach grew evermore annoying and painful. The truth is painful, but so long as I could drink on a lie, I could find some comfort, at least while drunk. I believe that an alcoholic cannot drink on the truth; an alcoholic can only drink on a lie—and I was an expert at believing lies.

After some time sober—guilt still all knotted up in my stomach—I heard someone say: **“Self cannot remove guilt with self.”** If that was true, then who can? The answer came to me on page 86 of our Big Book (bottom of 1st full paragraph): *“After making our review, we ask God’s forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.”* [Bold emphasis mine] Of course, here the Big Book is about a nighttime critical analysis of the previous day, but I now use this for my entire past life. I now try to live in the spirit of Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve, thereby practicing the “corrective measures” mentioned above. Consequently, save for brief moments, that guilty pain has disappeared. Thank you God!

– Bob S., Richmond, IN



nuts & bolts

How Can I Be Helpful Here

When I first came into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, the steps were the easy part. It was the years of suffering beforehand that were difficult. Years of fighting desperately to drink like a normal person, and years of failing miserably. So by the time I surrendered truly and completely to the fact that I was powerless over alcohol and that every area of my life had indeed become unmanageable, I was also coming to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity, and in fact, this saved my life. I'm grateful to this day that no one told me that power had to be god. Cause if they had, I might not still be sober four years later.

When I first entered the rooms, AA was the power greater than myself. Contained within these creepy church basements were strange smiling people who were doing something I had never been able to do on my own. Not only were they not drinking for extended periods of time, but they were actually enjoying their lives without alcohol. What I had found was sobriety, and I wanted it more than anything I've ever wanted in my life. I believed wholeheartedly that with the help of these strange people,

along with the Big Book and the twelve steps contained within, some semblance of sanity could be restored.

As the days, months and years passed by, my definition of a higher power changed, evolved, and shape-shifted—probably a good thing because so has my definition of insanity. I've come to believe that my thinking is often “insane” and that I need powers greater than myself in every area of my life to restore me back to mental health. Step twelve doesn't say “practice these principles in some of my affairs.”

For me step two is about humility. It's about recognizing that every time I admit my powerlessness, regardless of the situation, whether it's over alcohol or my ability to find the canned pumpkin at the grocery store, by simply reaching out for help I become open to connect with a power greater than myself, even if that power is the pimply-faced teenager with the No Frills t-shirt.

Lastly I'd like to share one of the more useful tools I've acquired along the way, one which keeps me in a humble ‘step two mentality’ for most situations. As I mentioned, my thoughts will often run away with me. In fact it's safe to say they

strap

on their

Nikes and

sprint. And it's

almost always in a negative, judgmental, self-centered, fear-laden direction. So unless I find some way to reign them in they will invariably run head first into the deep, dark, tunnels of despair, where suddenly a drink starts to sound like the only way out. So what's the higher power I connect to in these situations? The principle of service. I stop the thoughts dead in their tracks by asking one very simple question: HOW CAN I BE HELPFUL HERE? No matter where I am or what I'm doing, if my thoughts start going haywire or I start feeling awkward or self-consciousness or less-than, I stop and ask “how can I be helpful here?” My focus immediately shifts from me, myself and I to you and them and others. I find ways to help, to be of service, to pick up some chairs, to wash dishes, to shovel my neighbor's driveway, and as a result I get relief. I am restored to sanity and I remain sober for one more day. And for that I am eternally grateful.

– Daniel B.

A New Chapter of my Journey Begins

My name is Seán, and I am an alcoholic. I am also a professional, a dad, a son, a brother, a friend, a sponsor, a sponsee... Wow, we are complicated beings, aren't we? There are some things in life, though, that need not be so complicated. I have come to realize this program is one of those things. I have always, I mean always, had a penchant for reading between the lines. With the Big Book, though...I just needed to read the lines! Imagine that! The list above, without the admission of my powerlessness over

alcohol, becomes much shorter. Or, at the very least, some not-so-flattering descriptors are added before them (absent dad, estranged son, etc.).

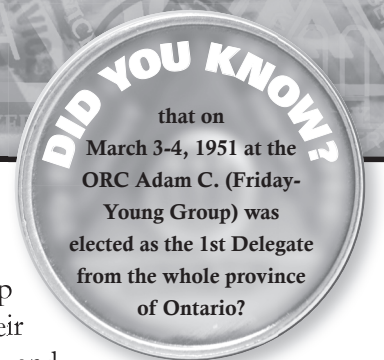
My sobriety date is June 9th, 2014. That is when I stopped drinking. While my goal initially was to do just that, I know now that this program can be so much more. I am not just a friend or a dad, I'm a good friend...a happy, positive dad (still working on the cool part, sigh).

A significant part of becoming the person I want to be, in and outside this

program, is to simply show up. That is why I am very grateful to have the opportunity to take over the reigns here at The Better Times as the new Layout Artist.

The Communications Committee have been very welcoming, and I thank them for making this so easy. I look forward to this new adventure, and of continuing and expanding my journey through service.

– Yours in Service, Seán D.



sharing // wordsearch

A Decision of the Heart

The Big Book tells me that if I was even willing to believe, I would commence to get results (p. 46). But then, believing was no problem for a person such as me, who was absolutely terrified of taking that next drink. When I read Step Two, I exclaimed: I believe! I believe! I considered my simple choice:

- Believe and get sober
- Don't believe and get drunk

Someone asked: "How does an alcoholic become willing to believe?" Answer: "Just drink enough hooch, and you'll get willing!" I certainly batted one-thousand on that score! So, Step Two was no great shakes for yours truly—but was believing enough? The Devil believed in God, and look where he ended up!

My sponsor, Carl, pointed out that the ABCs on page 60 amount to: I can't, but God can! The next paragraph says: "Being convinced, we are now at step Three." . . . and that the operative word was NOW! Immediate action was necessary—after all, if faith without works is dead, then willingness without action is fantasy! I had lived in alcoholic fantasy quite sufficiently, thank you.

But to whom should I pray for help? My concepts of God changed day by day; each conclusion would seem more logical than the previous one. However, it was explained that this life-saving power was not to be found by a conclusion of the mind, but by making a decision of the heart . . . and also, that this power was not far away. The Big Book tells us: "We found the Great Reality

deep down within us. In the last analysis it is only there it can be found" (p. 55). It was further explained that the capitalized 'Great Reality' was that power to whom I should pray for help, and no further 'conclusions of the mind' would be necessary.

I was told that if I continued with the Twelve Steps I would most likely develop a conscious contact with said Great Reality deep within (God), resulting in a real possibility for a release from that terrifying mental obsession. This was an offer I couldn't refuse, so I humored my sponsor and tried it—guess what? Some months later, a blessed release did come over me which has been continuous for many years. I have not had to drink since my first AA meeting.

It works—it really does.

— Bob S.

73rd Ontario Regional Conference Wordsearch

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

Find the hidden word with the letters left over after completing this puzzle. Email your answer to bettertimes@aatontario.org or wait until next month's Better Times, we will publish it there.

ABILITY	FRIEND	SAFEGUARD
ACCEPTANCE	HOTEL	SATISFY
BELIEF	HOW	SPEAKER
CALM	LEARN	SPONSOR
CONFERENCE	LOVE	TORONTO
CONTROL	MEETING	TRIP
DEFECT	NORMAL	TRUTH
DENIAL	ONTARIO	WELCOME
DRINK	POWER	WILLING
FAITH	RECOVER	WORK
FEELINGS	RESENTMENT	

Hidden Word:

Change at your Better Times

On behalf of Marc S., the Better Times Editor-in-Chief, and the entire Communications Committee, I would like to graciously thank Glenn C. for his dedication and expertise in publishing the Better Times for the past two years+. Under strict time restraints, Glenn stepped up to the plate and got the job done...every month.

I would also like to welcome Seán D. as our new desktop publisher and layout artist. Seán's many years of experience will be a big asset to our committee. Welcome Seán!

Jeff D.
Communications Chair,
Toronto Intergroup

18th Archives Breakfast 18th

Let's Celebrate Our History

\$20



\$20

SPEAKER ANGIE P.
CINCINNATI, OHIO

Carmen's Banquet Centre
1520 Stone Church Rd. E., Hamilton, Ontario
Sunday April 10th, 2016

Doors Open at 9a.m.
Breakfast at 10a.m.
Speaker at 11a.m.

**I FOUND IT IN
THE ARCHIVES**

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

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.

Happy 73rd AA Birthday Toronto, Ontario, Canada!

On Wednesday, January 13, 1943 at 6:00 pm the first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous in Canada, Toronto, Ontario took place at the Little Denmark Restaurant on 331 Bay Street (on the west side) between Gerrard St. & College St. Present at the meeting were two non-alcoholics, Reverend George Little & Reverend Percy Price and six alcoholics - Tom E., Bruce M., Sam McC., Bus McT., Dorothy C. and Weems C.

We salute & thank all the AA giants who came before us to help us find AA in the GTA, Ontario & Canada.

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.

... and please don't forget ...

Old GTA meeting books are needed for the GTA Archives.



BETTER TIMES announcements

PAST MEDALLIONS

Heather Y.	10	Keep it Simple Group	Jan 3	Annie A.	1	Markland Wood Group	Jan 14
Matthew T.	1	Crossroads Group	Jan 3	Jaz M.	5	Willowdale Group	Jan 14
Jackie M.	45	Mississauga Group	Jan 3	Timo M.	35	Scarborough Group	Jan 15
Glenn C.	18	Friendly Group	Jan 3	Gord H.	5	Traditional Group	Jan 11
Carole P.	1	Mt. Royal	Jan 5	Kristen B.	1	Lakeshore Group	Jan 17
Kara M.	1	Reaching Out Group	Jan 5	Helen O.	5	Reaching Out Group	Jan 19
Charlie A.	5	Scarborough Group	Jan 8	Wayne O.	35	Anniversary Group	Jan 20
Bob K.	20	Bellamy Group	Jan 11	Brian F.	10	Willowdale Group	Jan 21
Jean F.	35	Reaching Out Group	Jan 12	Pat Q.	20	East York Group	Jan 26
Caroline S.	5	12 Traditions Group	Jan 13	Darryl F.	5	Noon Rap Group	Jan 29
Jaz M.	5	Willowdale Group	Jan 14	Marlene F.	25	Leslie Group	Jan 30

UPCOMING MEDALLIONS

Michael G.	20	Leslie Group	Mar 26	Holly P.	5	Scarborough Group	April 1
Linda U.	25	Leslie Group	Mar 26	Rene T.	40	Birds of a Feather Group	April 3
Andrew B.	1	Leslie Group	Mar 26				

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

Got the Winter Blahs? Want to Get Back into Service & Meet New People?

GTA Intergroup SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES might be the answer...

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

- Four members are currently needed to serve on this committee.
- You need two years of continuous sobriety for this service.
- Anyone from the total membership in GTA can stand for these positions.
- Monthly Service Commitment: Attendance at both the monthly EC meeting, monthly General Meeting, and as Liaison to one of the monthly Subcommittee meetings.

FINANCE COMMITTEE (FC)

- One member is currently needed to serve on this committee.
- You need five years of continuous sobriety for this service and some business/accounting background is helpful.
- Anyone from the total membership in GTA can stand for this position.
- Monthly Service Commitment: Attendance at both the monthly FC meeting.

If you, or someone you know, has a few hours a month and are interested in an integral part of AA Service in the GTA, please contact Gail at office@aatoronto.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



■ 73rd Ontario Regional Conference: No Longer Alone

March 11, 12, 13, 2016

Fairmont Royal York Hotel, Toronto

AA, Al-Anon, Alateen speakers

Register Online: www.aatoronto.org
416-640-1905

■ Subcommittee Displays

located outside the
Concert Hall, west end foyer,
on the Convention Level Floor
March 11th & March 12th

Access Ability
Archives
Communications
Corrections
CPC
Info AA Day/Self Support
Grapevine
Public Information
Twelve Step
TOYPAA
Treatment
WSOH

■ 18th Annual Hamilton Archives Breakfast

Sunday, April 10th
Carmen's Banquet Centre
1520 Stone Church Rd. E., Hamilton

\$20

All are welcome!

spotlight on

Love & Tolerance Group *continued from Page 5*

Our biggest dilemma came when we could not fit the amount of people who were showing up. It was beyond standing room only—we were sitting on the floor, window sills, and each other's laps. We even tried having two rooms until finally we agreed we needed a bigger space. And we found it at The Paulist Centre (Bathurst & Bloor) and had our first meeting in the new location in November of 2014. We worried that the intimate, electric feeling people commonly described would change, but it didn't. It just got bigger. And now on a Tuesday there are 200+ people gathering, often standing room only.

We are active in District 10 service meetings: CAMH, Women's Own Detox, Grant House, Seaton House. Our members have put on the Friday night St Mike's Detox meeting for years. We communicate through a group email that, at last count, had 80+ members on it.

Last summer we had our second annual L&T picnic at Christie Pitts. There were members from many downtown meetings who showed up, and it was beautiful to see everybody bonded in the Fellowship of the Spirit.

L&T prides itself on its diversity and inclusive membership. We have had people who call themselves 'honorary members' from other countries, one of whom will be starting 'Love & Tolerance Venice' in Venice Beach, California.

We are 'not a glum lot' as the Book says and that is the Truth for our Home group, a group that genuinely cares about each other and service. It has been life giving. When we go around a room of 200+ people and say, "I am _____ and I am an alcoholic", it is a powerful thing. Warren and I look at each other from across a completely packed room with full hearts, and a smile knowing that from a simple idea something much greater than us has begun.

— In Love & Service, Heather A.

