



## OCTOBER IS GRATITUDE MONTH

Please consider making a contribution to Intergroup this year.

Intergroup relies on the generosity of A.A. Members and Groups to support its mission of carrying A.A.'s message of hope and recovery in the GTA.

Visit [aatoronto.org](http://aatoronto.org) to donate.

- e-Transfer to  
[contributions@aatoronto.org](mailto:contributions@aatoronto.org)

Or mail a cheque to 234 Eglinton Avenue East, Toronto, ON, M4P 1K5 payable to "Toronto Intergroup"  
**NO AMOUNT IS TOO SMALL!**

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## Reflections on 'Gratitude in Action'

The stories in the Big Book begin with ten from A.A. pioneers. The story *Gratitude in Action* was written by one of the founders of A.A. in Canada in 1944, Dave. B. After three stays in a psychiatric institution and an Easter weekend in a jail cell in Montreal, Dave contacted the A.A. office in New York City.

Dave recalls his first phone call with a member of A.A., a woman named Bobbie. Bobbie identified herself as an alcoholic who had recovered and assured him that the fellowship would help. Such was the seriousness with which members of A.A. then took their responsibility to the newcomer that, for the next year, Dave received daily letters from A.A. members in New York!

Once Dave was on solid footing, Bobbie and her fellow A.A.'s entrusted him with carrying the A.A. message to alcoholics across Canada. His first task was to reply to 400 letters written by Canadian alcoholics to the New York office.

Working the twelfth step of the A.A. program, Dave found a solution to his alcohol problem. Only after throwing himself into this work did it even occur to him to look for a job to support his family. Instead, Dave's wife insisted that she would remain the sole breadwinner for one more year while he devoted himself entirely to twelfth step work. Dave went on to help establish Alcoholics Anonymous in Canada.

The first A.A. meetings in Quebec, including the first French-speaking meetings, were held in Dave's home. A vibrant fellowship of alcoholics and their families, made up of people who normally would not mix, grew up about Dave and his wife. Fear of economic insecurity left



**“Let us demonstrate our gratitude by each one of us extending the hand of A.A.”**

him; another member helped him get his first job in years. From his very first phone call with Bobbie, Dave learned that to stay sober he had to carry the A.A. message to other alcoholics.

As an alcoholic, Dave's story is important to me. It reminds me that it is not enough to feel grateful for my sobriety. I have to take selfless action daily to lead a sober life. Just think; had Dave, his wife, and others like them not committed to working a spiritual program of action, we alcoholics in Canada today would not stand a chance! Let us demonstrate our gratitude by each one of us extending the hand of A.A. to the still suffering alcoholic.

Cole W.

## Gratitude through Service

When I first came into the rooms, I focused on all the things that were going wrong in my life, the mistakes I'd made, and the consequences I was feeling as a result. All I could see at the time were the deficits in my life – the relationships I had harmed, the material possessions I didn't have, and the feeling that something within me was wrong.

I was told early on to start practising gratitude - to make lists of the things I was grateful for. This change in perspective, from focusing on the deficits to focusing on the surplus, was my first real expression of gratitude. It

helped me to be present, live in today, and helped stave off my fears of what tomorrow would or wouldn't bring. But this wasn't enough. As the consequences that led me into the rooms began to fade and the unmanageability in my life disappeared, the small things with which I was blessed became less significant. I had to take action.

Today, I am able to combine my shift in perspective with actions that bring me closer to my higher power (HP). In doing so, I am able to maintain a better connection with my HP, and

—cont'd on page 04—

# THE ANONYMOUS GREETER... WHO CHANGED MY LIFE

## I was not grateful

to have to call the GTA Alcoholics Anonymous Helpline, but I was pretty desperate. A greeter answered the phone. "Hi! How can I help you? Are you looking for a meeting?" they asked.

"Yeah..." I muttered grumpily, "I guess..."

"Well, whereabouts are you in Toronto?" they asked assuredly.

"The West side..." I grumbled.

"The Parkdale meeting starts at 1pm, I bet you could make it." they said.

"Uh, I... I don't want to go today... but sometime... maybe..." I really didn't want to make a change, but my life was coming apart fast.

"Well, I suggest you go because you may hear what you need to hear today..."

Because of that person I went to the meeting. There I met some of the greatest AA fellows of all time who are still in my life today. In fact, one of them became my sponsor.

Now, my body, mind, spirit, and relationships are healed, in part, because of that anonymous phone greeter. The only way I can think of expressing my gratitude is to be of service in this life saving program, just like that greeter. Where would I be without the "greeter service Helpline" provided by GTA Intergroup? I shudder to think.

GTA Intergroup is fortunate enough to have a team made up of a Greeter Coordinator, greeters, data entry and technical volunteers, as well as a 12Step chair who, working together, ensure the smooth operation of the AA Help Lines.

**Three Greeter Coordinator positions are now open to work on a rotating basis.**

**The Greeter Coordinator's responsibilities include: answering emails from greeters who may wish to make**

changes to their assignments, inputting such changes to the schedule, then placing the revised schedule on the drive to alert the data entry team. Responding to offers of service from members, scheduling qualifying members to a training session and assigning those interested to one or more shifts. Entering newly assigned greeters in the record of greeters. We are endeavouring to have four coordinators on duty for one week each. This is a two-year assignment.

Access to a computer, tablet and/or smartphone, knowledge of Microsoft Office programs, (Word / Excel), as well as Google Drive and Gmail are required.

A great way to do service! Those interested in this new opportunity may do so by emailing Lise R., Greeter Coordinator:

[greetercoordinator@aatoronto.org](mailto:greetercoordinator@aatoronto.org)



## WE'LL REFUND YOUR MISERY

*"To all you happy people in AA. When I was new I was told to join a group and get a sponsor. I was told: try it for 90 days and if you don't like it we'll refund your misery! I've had my up and down days. They told me don't drink and go to meetings - one day at a time. It does work as long as you work it. I have a lot of 'One day at a times' as I've been sober since March 11, 1983.*

*I thank you people and the god of my understanding for my sobriety. Hang in there."*

Bill J - Friendly Group

## MELROSE GROUP TURNS 40! Celebrate with us on Sat. Oct. 14, 2023

Refreshments at 11am meeting at noon

3962 Bloor St. West  
St. Matthew's Anglican Church

Share this milestone with us!

## 20 YEARS IN THE MAKING

Our group "Strength in Recovery" is passing a milestone. Our 20th Anniversary Celebration is on Oct. 30, 7pm, at St. Hilary's Church in Mississauga, join us! In the past 20 years we've had location changes, membership challenges, and other obstacles to overcome. But we made it this far because of our Primary Purpose: to stay sober and help alcoholics achieve sobriety.

Our group was originally called the "Mississauga Men's Meeting". The first official meeting was held Oct. 26, 2003 in Streetsville. The four founding members were: Dave W. and Mike F. (from the Mississauga Group), Jamie S (Fifth Wheel) and Eamon P. (Trial and Error). On Jan. 2004, we moved to Mississauga City Baptist Church. Meetings were sparsely attended spring and summer of that year, at times no one showed up.

By Sept. of 2004, the group was in trouble. As the GSR, Mike F. attended the District 6 meeting for support. The group's name changed to the "Mississauga Mixed Meeting", open for both men and women. Attendance began to improve and new members joined. In Jan. 2005, the group settled on its present name "Strength in Recovery", referring to a passage in a Hazelden publication.

In Oct. 2008, the group moved to the "Mosquito Bar and Grill" in Port Credit. The group's 5th anniversary was celebrated there. However the Mosquito went bankrupt, forcing us to search for a new location.

The group moved to Cooksville United Church and attendance increased. The room was often packed with 20 members or more. Outdoor meetings were frequent in the summer. Candles are occasionally lit for the still suffering alcoholic.

The group moved again March 2012 to St. Luke's, but in 2019 it became a retreat facility. So we moved again to our present location at St Hilary's Church. Attendance ballooned. Then Covid suspended the Group's activities until Apr. 2022.

These days our membership is still small, our operating expenses have increased, but we're grateful to still be here. We want to grow and serve AA by keeping the doors open so please join us for our 20th Group Anniversary Oct. 30, 7 pm, St. Hilary's Church in Mississauga. Let's meet for another 20!

Mike F. - Strength in Recovery Group

# haveyouheard

## “BY OUR OWN CONTRIBUTIONS...”

In the early times, we were all broke...we were as tight as the bark on a tree” writes Bill W. in the “12 Steps and 12 Traditions”(12n12 p.160). In the book “The Language of the Heart” there is a moment where some guy yells out to the treasurer “Why in the world are you always talking about money when (AA) is a spiritual program?” Why *does* AA need money?



Without money, would there be Helplines for newcomers to call, public meeting locations to go to, pamphlets or books to get information from, archives of wisdom, websites, conferences, medallions, offices or special workers? Would there even be coffee?! What about the Big Book, would it have been written? It was only because of the \$4,000 loan from Charles B. Towns that Bill W. was able to take the time to write the Big Book.

Bill W. thought that wealthy benefactors were the way to go. In 1937 when Bill W. met with Rockefeller bigwig Mr. Scott to ask for a large grant Mr. Scott asked “won’t money spoil this thing?” Mr. Scott was on to something. “One group was given \$5,000 dollars (\$70,000 today)...The hassle over that chunk of money played havoc for years...(as an) outside interference in (AA’s) affairs”(12n12 p.161). The pioneers of AA eventually conceded that “he who pays the piper calls the tune”. So in order for AA to maintain its autonomy they had to accept the idea that individual members had to provide all the financial support. Step 7 was born: “every AA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions”.

There is a balancing act between two forces: practical material needs, and maintaining spiritual integrity. But thanks to the trials, errors and lessons learned, Bill W. and AA did figure out the balancing act. They wrote it all down in the 12 traditions and the 12 concepts. These procedures enable the management of member donations in order to further the Primary Purpose: to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

With humble pocket change and generous member donations, AA’s GTA intergroup offices, archives, special workers and trusted servants are able to function efficiently providing the materials and support that its groups need to help the still suffering alcoholic. October is gratitude month, please consider giving what you can of your material wealth to enlarge the spiritual wealth of this lifesaving fellowship. Thank you. ---Luke G - High Park Group---

## GTAI/DISTRICT - OCTOBER SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

- Accessibilities - Sun. Oct. 15 – 11 a.m.  
ID: 824 8962 1874 PW: 799763
- Archives - Fri. Oct. 13 – 7 p.m.  
ID: 841 5376 9412 PW: 018851
- Communications - Tues. Oct. 17 – 8 p.m.  
ID: 857 4633 2916 PW: 602471
- CPC/PI - Mon. Oct. 16 – 7 p.m.  
ID: 854 7547 0291 PW: 002060
- Correctional Facilities - Tues. Oct. 3 – 7 p.m.  
ID: 883 8002 9737 PW: 950392
- Information AA Day 2024 - Mon. Oct. 23 – 7 p.m.  
ID: 881 8277 5978 PW: 602471
- IT Subcommittee - Tues. Oct. 10 – 8 p.m.  
ID: 865 3323 7756 PW: 936637
- Self-Support - Thurs. Oct. 26 – 6:30 p.m.  
ID: 820 9238 0206 PW: 319853
- Treatment - Thurs. Oct. 19 – 7 p.m.  
ID: 868 2207 4860 PW: 787289
- Twelfth Step - Wed. Oct.11 – 7 p.m.  
ID: 813 0646 6967 PW: 572531
- Winter Season Virtual Alkathon Wed. Oct.4-7 p.m.  
ID: 810 4747 2912 PW: 727922
- Winter Season Open House - Sun. Oct.22-9:30 a.m.  
In Person: Bloordale United Church, 4258 Bloor St W, Etobicoke – Room 14

## OCTOBER MEDALLIONS

- Al R.** Bloordale - 30 yrs. on Sun, Oct. 01, 2023 @ 8pm
- Jim R.** Bloordale - 30 yrs. on Sun, Oct. 15, 2023 @ 8pm
- Matthew H.** High Park - 10 yrs. on Sun. Oct. 08, 23 @ 8pm
- Mathew C.** High Park- 1 yr. on Sun. Oct 15, 2023 @ 8pm
- Doug W.** Erin Mills - 15 yrs. on Sat. Oct. 23, 2023

## GRATITUDE ROUNDUP 2023!

“A New Foundation”

9 workshops + AA speaker!

9am-6pm - Sat. Nov. 4

St. Vlodymyr Ukrainian Inst., 620 Spadina Ave

SUPPORT A 40 YEAR TRADITION

Tickets \$25. To purchase contact:  
[gratitude2023@rsvpify.com](mailto:gratitude2023@rsvpify.com)

## “Hey there AA groups of the GTA! The Virtual Alkathon wants you!”

Please sign up to chair a meeting on one of the following days -  
Dec 24: noon-1am / Dec 25: 4 pm-am / Dec 31: noon-1am / Jan 01: 7am-4pm

Only 40 meetings so pick your time NOW!  
Email your time to -  
[winterseasonvirtualalkathon@aatoronto.org](mailto:winterseasonvirtualalkathon@aatoronto.org)

## WINTER SEASON VIRTUAL ALKATHON





## The Hill Group - 75 years of Gratitude

As we approach the 75th anniversary of the Hill Group let us reminisce about its historic journey. 80 years ago the very first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous in Toronto was held on January 13, 1943, at the Little Denmark restaurant by two ministers and six alcoholics. Rapid growth forced the meeting to move to 1170 Yonge Street the next year and Alcoholics Anonymous was launched in Canada.

Early in 1945, Lt. Colonel Goodwin G., O.B.E. (affectionately known as "Gib"), along with Tom G. and a few others who were (and I quote from Hill Archives) "dissatisfied with the spiritual component at Toronto's only AA meeting", broke away to start Toronto's second group. With resentment and a coffee pot in hand, they started the Midtown Group.

Then in 1948 the Colonel, apparently tired of the trek, went about founding another group, The Hill. From the Hill Archives: "Being a man of drive and newfound energy Goodwin... cast about for a location near his home from which to spread the message...". 75 years ago, this was the beginning of the venerable Hill Group.

Ten people attended the first Hill meeting – six alcoholics and four wives. Goodwin was a big advocate of involving spouses and their families in the spirit of Alanon. The Colonel "bent every effort in that direction". From our Hill History Book: "He travelled to New York in January of 1947 and talked to our Co-founder Bill W. about his ideas regarding the wives and families of AA."

Other founding members and spouses were Ken and Olive B., Hugh and Ivy K., Tom and Mrs. G., Ted and Jean G., Tom D., Ted H. and our first female members Rosalie C., Ann C., and Velma G. The Hill grew, and by 1957, more than 100 people were regularly attending.

The Hill was known as the "Mink and Pearls" group. "It was a very classy group" frequented by Forest Hill residents, coffee was served in China cups with saucers remembered Rene D. who died with 52 years of sobriety. "It was one of the largest groups in Toronto, and if you got to speak there, you'd hit the big time".

Business meetings were initially held in member homes. After one business meeting "everyone retired to the den to watch the Maple Leafs in the 6th game of the Stanley Cup. 1967!" In typical Hill fashion, the report was subdued. They don't even mention that the Leafs WON the Stanley Cup!

Post COVID, the Hill is returning to its former glory. They have signers for the hard of hearing and set out 200+ chairs a night at their open Thursday meeting.

These were the beginnings that lead right up to today. We have been continuously in the same location for 75 years, and what a blessing that has been.

Join our open meeting on Thursday, Oct. 19 to celebrate our 75th anniversary at Timothy Eaton Memorial Church. We'd sure love to see you there. You are the sole reason we are here today.

--- Mel C., grateful Hill member ---

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

## Gratitude through Service - Cont'd

as a result, I am granted moments of serenity. Practising gratitude is, for me, an act of ego deflation. It is a recognition that the blessings in my life have not come about by my will alone, but rather through the help of the AA program, the fellowship and my HP. When I do service, placing humility first, I am able to share my blessings with others, and become more grateful. - Kevin L - Beaches Group

## Did you Know?

1. In October, 1937, Dr. Bob & Bill W. met again in Akron. They counted 40 sober members with half of them sober for two years. It was a remarkable success story since all the sober members had previously been declared hopeless & beyond any help. Bill had ideas for AA hospitals, paid missionaries & a book of experience to carry the message to distant places. Dr. Bob liked the book idea but not the hospitals & paid missionaries. At the Akron meeting, Bill's book idea narrowly passed. The NY group was more enthusiastic. This historical milestone marked the decision to write the Big Book that, in turn, led to the formation of a service structure.
2. In October 1942, Clarence S. (founder of AA in Cleveland) stirred up a controversy in Cleveland after discovering that Bill & Dr. Bob were receiving royalties from the Big Book sales. Bill & Dr. Bob reexamined the problem of their finances & concluded that royalties seemed to be the only answer. Bill sought counsel from Father Edward Dowling (Bill's spiritual sponsor) who suggested that Bill & Dr. Bob could certainly not accept money from 12th Step work but should accept royalties as compensation for "special services." This later formed the basis for Tradition 8 & Concept 11. Both co-founders dedicated so much time to the Fellowship, it was impossible for them to earn a living through their normal professions.

## 39TH ARCHIVES BREAKFAST!

Sunday Nov. 5, 2023 9am-1pm

Tickets \$30 (Seating limited to 175)

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All are invited to attend the 39th Annual GTAI  
Archives Breakfast!

**Location:** Bloordale United Church,  
4258 Bloor Street West, Etobicoke

9am to 1pm, Coffee, Buffet breakfast, Open Speaker  
meeting, door and raffle prizes!

**Guest Speaker:** Mari G. Markham-Village Group.

**Contact:** Glenn G. Chair 647-572-5687

Gord H. Past Chair 416-414-8374

Eddy G. Archivist 416-536-7536

David T. Assistant Archivist 613-868-9243