

BETTER TIMES

PRODUCED MONTHLY FOR AA MEMBERS IN THE GREATER TORONTO AREA

AUGUST 2025
8TH TRADITION

August 2025 8th Tradition

The Eighth Tradition reminds us that AA is a program of service. AA is a non-professional group; helping other alcoholics is our primary purpose.

SHARE YOUR STORY



Please scan the QR Code or tap this box and you will be directed to our anonymous content submission page.

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How To Reach Us

Submit Group News, medallions, event notices, letters to the editor and articles to Better Times, before the 10th of the month prior to month of issue by email to

bettertimes@aatoronto.org
or contact Alex at 416-487-8110

FINDING MY WAY HOME



I never thought I'd be the kind of person who'd end up writing about recovery. But here I am – 34 years sober, still attending meetings, still learning, still healing – and I want to share a bit of my journey in case it helps someone else find their way.

School was hard for me. I had several learning disabilities that made everything – from reading to paying attention – feel like an uphill climb. My parents were good people, loving and supportive, but it was tough for all of us. They didn't always know how to help me, and I didn't know how to ask for help. By my late teens, I was coming home drunk more often than not. Loud, unpredictable, and out of control. My parents, at a loss, made the painful decision to put me in a group home. They simply couldn't cope with the chaos anymore. At the time, I felt abandoned. Looking back, I know it came from a place of love – they wanted me to be safe, even if that meant I couldn't be under their roof.

I was a party girl, through and through – always out, always surrounded by people living the same fast life. But underneath all the noise was a deep sense of emptiness I didn't know how to fill. Even as I began building my career and living on my own, the drinking didn't slow down. I convinced myself I was just blowing off steam, enjoying life. In reality, I was drinking to survive. Everything caught up to me at 30. I had a mental and physical breakdown. My body shut down. My mind spiralled. I was diagnosed with anxiety and depression and put on medication. But meds alone weren't enough – I needed something more.

A friend gently suggested I come with her to an AA meeting. I was skeptical, but I went. That meeting changed my life.

It was the first time I sat in a room and felt completely understood. These people – strangers – were telling my story. I kept going, I listened. I stayed open. I found a sponsor, joined a home group, did service work and started working the steps.

And here's what I've learned: it's not just about putting down the drink. It's about finding something greater – a higher power, a spiritual path, a sense of belonging. It's about listening and learning. Keeping an open mind.

I still see my psychologist; that part of my journey hasn't changed, and maybe it never will. My mental health requires consistent care, just like my sobriety. Today, I go to five AA meetings a week – not just to stay sober, but to stay spiritually connected and mentally grounded.

Life isn't perfect. I still struggle, just like anyone else. But now, I don't struggle alone. I have a fellowship, a partner, and a friend in the rooms who walks this journey with me. And I have peace – a kind I never thought possible.

If you're new or struggling, please know: “you're not alone”. “Keep coming back.” There's a whole life waiting for you on the other side of the bottle. One of clarity, connections, and hope.

Thanks for letting me share.

-Jill J., Melrose Group

The Meaning of Service

Many of us think of service as some form of chore, something we must do because some authority said we should. More like homework after school. Not much fun.

We often hear AA members speak about the benefits of service and how grateful they are for this program. But in my experience, this truth only becomes evident once we surrender.

Service is not a chore in AA. Some say it's a privilege. I choose to go with that. I will not tell a lie and pretend that there aren't times when I have felt like I was being put upon. But those times were few and far between. I realize that service is what keeps me sane and sober, even after some three decades of sobriety.

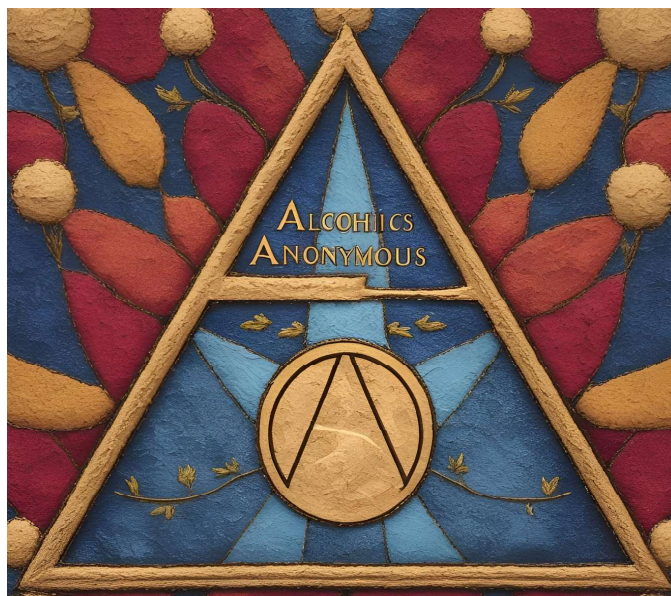
Cliches like giving back don't do it for me. My experience is more about what I got back from service. long-term sobriety, the kind of peace of mind I never experienced when I was drinking, and increased energy.

As a newcomer, I did what the members of my group told me. I started with making coffee, then acted as secretary, chairperson, treasurer, then later, as Intergroup rep., until someone spoke about answering the phone lines for AA.

I became a phone greeter and joined the 12-Step Committee. Listening to some of the issues other people faced put perspective on my own situation. There were times when I was extremely grateful for my problems as they appeared insignificant by comparison.

If you're new or have been in the program for awhile and have not yet committed to doing service, now would be a good time to consider it. There are plenty of opportunities to do service in AA. Some of these opportunities can be found in your own groups, while others may request that you move around a bit.

If this is a problem for you, answering the phone lines from your home might be a solution. If you have a cell phone and a computer, and you have more than a year's sobriety, consider answering the help lines for AA. You can apply directly from the AA website. Scroll down to the heading "Carrying the Message of Hope" and find the **GTA AA Helpline Greeter Volunteer Form**. Fill out the application and press Enter. Your application will be directed to a volunteer who will contact you and set you up for training. It's that simple. But it's also life-changing. I know because it has been for me. I sincerely hope to have the pleasure of welcoming you to our amazing team soon.



Lise R., Greeter Coordinator

Our Twelve Traditions



I am a member of the King City Group. We are a welcoming and inclusive fifty-three-year-old meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous in York Region. One of our primary purposes, along with carrying the recovery message of our program, is in our identification as a 'traditional AA group'. We hold our Twelve Traditions close to our hearts.

Each month on the last Wednesday, we have our regular Tradition meeting. About two years or more ago, we began to include the June Grapevine choice of 'Book of the Month' entitled "Our Twelve Traditions". It was a most successful addition to our meeting. The chairperson was asked to select a story from the book and, along with the group reading the Tradition of the month (Tradition One in Jan, etc) from the 12 & 12, plus a short AA history Quiz at the start of the meeting, our attendance soared. Most acquired the book from our library.

I believe our KCG may be the only group that comments on a Tradition after we recite the 12 Traditions at our open meetings. It has proved to be very popular, and often entertaining when a member recalls a situation in their experience when the Tradition did not work well.

We are very pleased that this Grapevine book has been chosen as the Book of the Month. For our KCG, it means a great deal to us now, and it is essential to the enlightenment and piqued interest of our members in understanding the "glue that keeps AA together". The stories are purposeful and central to ongoing issues in our program and have been enormously helpful.

Much thanks to a wonderful book choice!

Bernadette M., King City Group



SHARE YOUR STORY

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR BETTER TIMES' SUMMER ISSUES

Summer is Here – SUNSHINE – Share Your Thoughts and Pen a letter to Better Times

Please scan the QR Code or tap this box and you will be directed to our [anonymous content submission page](#).

GTAI/DISTRICT - August SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Accessibilities - TBA

ID: 824 8962 1874 - PW: 799763

Archives - Fri. Aug. 08, 7 p.m.

ID: 841 5376 9412 - PW: 018851

Communications - Tues. Aug. 19, 8 p.m.

ID: 850 5256 7237 - PW: 984555

CPC/PI - Tues. Aug. 26, 7 p.m.

ID: 854 7547 0291 - PW: 002060

Correctional Facilities - Tues. Aug. 05, 7 p.m.

ID: 883 8002 9737 - PW: 950392

Self-Support - Meets every other month.

Next Meeting: TBA

ID: 820 9238 0206 - PW: 319853

Treatment - Sun. Aug. 17, 4 p.m.

ID: 868 2207 4860 - PW: 787289

Twelfth Step - Wed. Aug. 13, 7 p.m.

ID: 813 0646 6967 - PW: 572531

IT Subcommittee - Mon. Aug. 04, 7 p.m.

ID: 814 0942 9019 - PW: 379691

Information AA Day - TBA

ID: 811 827 5978 - PW: 587553

47th Annual SERVICE DAY 2025- "Gratitude in Action"

When: Saturday September 27th, 2025
Time: 1:00pm-4:00pm
Where: Oakridge Community Centre (63 Pharmacy Ave. Just north of Danforth Ave. on the east side- only two blocks east of Victoria Park Station)

Cost: FREE
Plenty of free-parking - Fully Accessible
Snacks and drinks provided

What is Service Day?

Whether you're newly sober or a treasured 'long-timer,' there are service positions available in District 22 (Scarborough) for everyone. Whether you can only spare an hour or two per month or have plenty of free time to be of service, District 22's Service Day is the place to find out all that A.A. has to offer in terms of being of service.

47th Annual Service Day 2025 - 'Gratitude in Action' is an action-packed 3 hours including:

- A Guest Speaker
- An explanation of service opportunities from each of the current chairs:
 - Accessibility,
 - Archives,
 - Grapevine,
 - Corrections,
 - Treatment Facilities,
 - Self-Support,
 - Intergroup,
 - CPC,
 - Public information
- Wheel of Recovery (by popular demand!) - participation optional

"I was going to meetings almost every day and was getting the hang of being sober. Being so grateful for A.A. and for sobriety in my life, I wanted to get more involved but was nervous and not sure which service opportunities were available. I had heard things like '12-Step Calling', 'Corrections Correspondence', 'Treatment Facilities Committees' etc. but had no idea what any of it was. However, after attending Service Day last year, I found out about tons of ways I could get more involved! I started going to monthly District Meetings (which, I didn't know at the time, are open for any and all AA members can attend!) and after a few months, I became the Treatment Facilities Chair for District 22. Our Treatment Committee members do many different things like calling potential treatment facilities, seniors' homes, hospitals and universities to see about getting literature or meeting into their facilities. We educate treatment facility staff about A.A.'s primary purpose and we share our stories with people in treatment, people who sometimes don't know that there's a way to stay sober after treatment. This is my Gratitude in Action!"

- Tracy A. (D22 Treatment Facilities Chair)

For more information, call or text any of the committee members below:

Joe A	416-998-1436	adcmdistrict22@gmail.com
Eddy G	416-536-7536	egesicki@rogers.com
Christa E	416-828-9580	sd22secretary@gmail.com
Iracy A	905-167-3136	d22treatmentfacilitieschair@gmail.com

MIDTOWN MEET UP

A One Day Reprieve

October 18, 2025

Trinity-St. Paul's

United Church

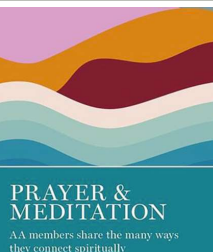
427 Bloor St. West

11 AM - 3 PM

Tickets \$20.

midtownmeetup2025@gmail.com

2 LAUGH HITS
"PUDDIN' HEAD" JUDY
"CANOVA" CANOVA
"CRACKED NUTS" STUART ERWIN & MISCHA AUER



GRAPEVINE BOOK OF THE MONTH

Features powerful stories by members of Alcoholics Anonymous about the many ways they pray and meditate in their daily lives. An integral part of AA recovery is learning to connect spiritually. The stories in this book show how members begin to pray and meditate and then branch out to develop very personal and often creative ways to practice. Chapters include daily routines, traditional religious practices, activities and exercises, unique techniques, the Serenity Prayer, and connecting with nature and the universe. All stories were previously published in Grapevine, the International Journal of AA. Great for recovery or those who want to explore prayer and meditation.

<https://www.aagrapevine.org/store/prayer-and-meditation-aagrapevine-softcover>

-Imran R. Grapevine

GREATER TORONTO AREA INTERGROUP

Join the 12 Step Help Line Phone Greeter Team

Do you have 4 hours a month to do service outside your home group?

TRAINING AVAILABLE

ANSWER CALLS REMOTELY OR IN THE OFFICE

ONE YEAR SOBRIETY REQUIREMENT

COULD BE THE MOST GRATIFYING SERVICE OUTSIDE THE GROUP

phonegreetercoordinator@aatoronto.org

OR VISIT AATORONTO.ORG

LOOK FOR SERVICE COMMITTEES AND CLICK ON 12TH STEP COMMITTEE

ARCHIVES CORNER

Did you Know ?

On Aug. 8, 1879, AA's Co-founder Dr. Bob (Robert Holbrook Smith) is born in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Dr Bob took his last drink on June 10th, 1935 which is the founding date of AA in Akron, Ohio by AA co-founders Bill W. & Dr. Bob. He was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 1948, last appearance talk at 1st International Convention 1950 in Cleveland, Ohio, he died on November 16, 1950 of cancer with 15 years of sobriety.

In Aug. 1934, Bill's third admission to Towns Hospital in NYC (again paid by Dr. Leonard Strong, who was married to Bill's sister Dorothy). Dr. Silkworth pronounced Bill a hopeless drunk & told Lois that Bill would have to be committed. Bill left the hospital a deeply frightened man & sheer terror kept him sober. He found a little work on Wall St., which began to restore his badly shattered confidence.

In Aug. 1934, Ebby T. Bill W.'s school friend & sponsor sobers up for 2 years.

In Aug. 1935, Bill W. returned to NYC from Akron, and he sought out alcoholics at the Calvary Mission & Towns Hospital. Meetings were held at Bill & Lois's house at 182 Clinton St. on Tuesday nights. The house also became a halfway house of sorts.

In Aug. 1937, Bill & Lois stopped attending Oxford Group meetings & the NY AAs separated from the Oxford Group. This was the beginning of AA separating itself from outside affiliation & set the groundwork for what would later become Tradition 6. The Akron group remained affiliated with the Oxford Group for two more years.

In Aug. 1941, Clarence S., founder of AA in Cleveland, joined with Abby G. & other Cleveland members to help start AA's first Central Office (see Dr. Bob & the Good Oldtimers book pg. 202). Bill W. also credits the Cleveland Central Office with introducing the principle of rotation to AA. There is reasonable debate over whether Cleveland or Chicago should be recognized as AA's first Central Office. In AA Comes of Age book, page 23, Bill discusses Chicago AA following Jack Alexander's Saturday Evening Post article & notes, "This was AA's first organized local service center, the forerunner of the many Intergroup Associations we maintain in large cities nowadays."

In Aug. 1942, the AA Office in New York granted distribution rights for the Big Book to Dr. George Little. Dr. Little formally transferred these rights to the Toronto AA Club on Sept. 22, 1944.

In Aug. 1945, the Grapevine carried Bill W.'s first Traditions essay titled "Modesty One Plank for Good Public Relations."

It began a 5-year campaign for the Traditions & General Service Conference. In the prior month's Grapevine, there was an article about the Washingtonians. Bill used this article to begin his essay commentaries.

-Eddy G., GTA Archivist

Greater Toronto Area Groups That Started in August

August 1, 1961 - Oshawa Friendship Group.

August 1965 - Alderwood Discussion Meeting.

August 3, 1978 - Oshawa Thursday Noon Hour Meeting.

August 15, 1982 - Eglinton Park Group.

August 5, 1993 - Vision of Hope Meeting (Mississauga)

Winter Season Open House (Free Event):

DEC 25TH 10 AM-4 PM

It will be held at:

Timothy Eaton Memorial Church

230 St Clair Ave W, Toronto, ON M4V 1R5

Dunvegan Rd entrance.

Sunday Sept 14th 2025 at 9am-10:30am

Sunday Oct 19th 2025 at 9am-10:30am

Sunday Nov 16th 2025 at 9am-10:30am

Sunday Dec 14th 2025 at 9am-10:30am

Committee meetings will be held at:

Timothy Eaton Memorial Church

230 St Clair Ave W, Toronto, ON M4V 1R5

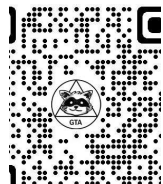
In person and zoom option for committee meetings.

If your interested on joining this fun active committee please contact Zobie G.

wsqh@aatoronto.org

Zobie 416 709 0178

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



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AUGUST MEDALLIONS

Don D., Prince Edward Group, 35 yrs, **Aug. 18**

Mark C., Six Points Group, 1 yr, **Aug. 21**

Pearl M., Woodbridge Group, 1 yr, **Aug. 21**

Tom M., Woodbridge Group, 25 yrs, **Aug. 28**

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Aug.01.2025 – 4 yrs – Pedro T. – Brampton Recovery Group
Aug.01.2025 – 6 yrs – Ian R. – Woodbridge Group
Aug.02.2025 – 32 yrs – Gael R. – Islington Group
Aug.02.2025 – 21 yrs – Isabel – Start Today Group
Aug.08.2025 – 18 yrs – Joan S. – Grace Noon
Aug.08.2025 – 11 yrs – Teresa U. – Grace Noon
Aug.09.2025 – 8 yrs – Eddie M. – Woodbridge Group
Aug.11.2025 – 2 yrs – Art B. – Woodbridge Group
Aug.18.2025 – 9 yrs – Jeremy H. – Brampton Recovery Group
Aug.18.2025 – 3 yrs – Tony L. – Woodbridge Group
Aug.19.2025 – 28 yrs – Rosemary D. – Melrose Group
Aug.20.2025 – 12 yrs – Tony L. – Melrose Group
Aug.20.2025 – 9 yrs – John S. – Woodbridge Group
Aug.23.2025 – 3 yrs – Joel C. – Melrose Group
Aug.27.2025 – 9 yrs – Dianne – Rexdale Group
Aug.29.2025 – 7 yrs – Mike P. – Brampton Recovery Group
Aug.29.2025 – 49 yrs – Ken B. – Woodbridge Group
Aug.30.2025 – 19 yrs – Lisa K. – Friendly Group
Aug.31.2025 – 41 yrs – Ken S. – Grace Noon

District 25 and the Orangeville Serenity Group

September 13, 2025 – 9 am to 6 pm

Broadway Pentecostal Church

556 Broadway Rd, Orangeville, ON

WOMEN'S ROUND-UP

Toronto Women in Recovery

September 22, 2025 – 11 am to 4 pm

The Church of St. Andrews

2333 Victoria Park Ave., Toronto, ON

IS THERE AN UPCOMING MEDALLION?

Please send your medallion details to bettertimes@aatoronto.org
in the format of:

name - homegroup - year(s) of sobriety - medallion date

Kindly note that Better Times only publishes the first year of continuous sobriety birthday celebrations or every subsequent 5th year of continuous sobriety (i.e. 1, 5, 10, 15, 20...)