

September 2025 9th Tradition

The Ninth Tradition guides us in taking responsibility for the harm we have caused in our past. We take steps to restore trust in those relationships. We do so by making amends.

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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...And Much More!

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, 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

SERVICE MADE THE DIFFERENCE

I came into the program in 2018, but I can't say I stayed sober from that first day. The truth is, I relapsed many times. My longest stretch before now was four years. Today, I have three years of continuous sobriety, but more importantly, I have what I call contented sobriety. That is a gift I didn't have before, even in my longest sober time.

What changed? Service.

I remember reading “Working with Others” in the Big Book and coming across a line that hit me square between the eyes: “nothing will so much ensure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.” I had read it before, but this time it landed differently. “It works when other activities fail.” It wasn't a suggestion to consider “someday.” It was direction. A spiritual nudge. I said yes.

I started small. I volunteered once a month on the Toronto Intergroup hotline, answering calls from people who were exactly where I had once been: confused, hurting, afraid, and unsure what to do next. I became a sponsor. I chaired meetings. I stepped up to serve as my district's Grapevine representative and technology coordinator. I found myself saying “sure, I can do that” a lot more than “someone else will take care of it.”

And you know what? It worked. I didn't just stay sober, I started to feel useful.

I still work full-time. I still have a family at home. Life is busy and sometimes chaotic. But the time I give to AA never feels like a burden. It feels like breathing, something I need to keep going. I also give credit to my husband, who is in Al-Anon. He's had to learn his way to take life one day at a time with me, and his program has helped our home life in ways I can't even measure.

Service has become my practice of faith. When I was new, I was told that if I turned my will and my life over to the care of God and did the work, I would have a spiritual experience. That experience, they said, would lead me to service. They were right. In the end, service is my living, breathing Step Twelve.

For me, service is more than helping out at a meeting or filling a position. It's about showing up for the next suffering alcoholic because I remember what it felt like when someone showed up for me. It's about answering the phone when I'd rather watch TV, driving someone to a meeting when my schedule is already full, or listening to a fifth step when my day has been rough. It's about putting the needs of the fellowship and the newcomer ahead of my comfort.

Some days, I get to witness the spark, that moment when someone's eyes light up because they realize they might not have to live the way they've been living anymore. Other days, I may never know if what I said or did made a difference. But I remind myself that my job is to plant seeds, not to count them.

Service keeps me grounded in gratitude. It reminds me that my sobriety is not mine alone, it's a gift that was freely given, and it comes with the responsibility to give it away if I want to keep it. The longer I'm sober, the more I realize that my recovery is not about me; it's about what I can bring to others.

I think often about something I heard early on: “You never know when your Step Twelve will be someone else's Step One.” It's true. I've been in situations where a simple conversation, a shared coffee, or an unexpected ride home turned out to be the turning point for someone else. Most of the time, I don't even realize it in the moment. I just try to be present and willing.

I've also learned that service doesn't just help the newcomer, it protects me. Left to my own devices, I can get restless, irritable, and discontent very quickly. My alcoholic mind is quick to tell me I'm too busy, too tired, or not needed. But when I step into service, that noise fades. I get pulled out of myself and into something bigger. That is the miracle.

When I think back to my first call to the hotline in 2018, I had no idea what I was stepping into. I was desperate, lost, and certain my life was beyond repair. The voice on the other end of the line didn't try to fix me. They just pointed me toward help. That one act of service, from a stranger I'll probably never meet, changed my life.

Today, I get to be on the other end of that call. I get to be the one who says, “You're not alone. There's a way out.” And I know, without question, that every time I do that, I'm keeping my sobriety strong.

Service hasn't just been part of my program; it's been the heartbeat of it. It's where my faith meets action. It's how I keep the promises of AA alive in my life and the lives of others.

If you're struggling, if your sobriety feels flat or joyless, I can only share my own experience: get into service. Say yes to something, even if it feels uncomfortable. Show up, even if you don't think you're needed. You might be surprised at how much it changes you.

-Gigget W., Miami Beach Group, Keswick, ON

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
Tracy A	905-767-3136	d22treatmentfacilitieschair@gmail.com



SHARE YOUR STORY

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND PEN A PUBLICATION/POETRY TO BETTER TIMES

REMINDER that the Better Times deadline for submissions are due on the 10th of the month prior to publication.

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

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' JUDY
HEAD" "IN CANOVA
"CRACKED NUTS"
STUART, ERWIN & MISCHA AUER

GTAI/DISTRICT - September SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Accessibilities - TBA
ID: 824 8962 1874 - PW: 799763
Archives - Fri. Sep. 12, 7 p.m.
ID: 841 5376 9412 - PW: 018851
Communications - Tues. Sep. 16, 8 p.m.
ID: 850 5256 7237 - PW: 984555
CPC/PI - Tues. Sep. 30, 7 p.m.
ID: 854 7547 0291 - PW: 002060
Correctional Facilities - Tues. Sep. 02, 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. Sep. 21, 4 p.m.
ID: 868 2207 4860 - PW: 787289
Twelfth Step - Wed. Sep. 10, 7 p.m.
ID: 813 0646 6967 - PW: 572531
IT Subcommittee - Mon. Sep. 01, 7 p.m.
ID: 814 0942 9019 - PW: 379691
Information AA Day - TBA
ID: 811 827 5978 - PW: 587553



SOBER & OUT
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
AA Members Share Their Experience,
Strength and Hope

GRAPEVINE BOOK OF THE MONTH

Sober & Out is a collection of stories by AA members who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (and a few friends) from the pages of AA Grapevine. They share their experience, strength and hope with alcoholism as well as their personal struggles and hard-fought triumphs. The stories in this book show that—like most alcoholics—LGBT AAs struggle to fit in, stay sober and find peace in their lives. By working the Steps, following the Traditions, doing service, and finding a Higher Power, they are now living sober in the Fellowship of AA.

<https://www.aagrapevine.org/store/sober-out-aa-grapevine-softcover>

-Imran R. Grapevine

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



Scan this QR code to access
more
"Better Times" issues!

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.

ARCHIVES CORNER

Did you Know ?

On **Sept. 17, 1934**, Bill W. entered Towns Hospital for the third time (again paid by Dr. Leonard Strong, husband of Bill's sister Dorothy). Dr. Silkworth pronounced him as hopeless & told Lois that Bill would likely have to be committed. Bill left the hospital a very broken man & sheer terror kept him sober. He found some work on Wall St., which restored his shattered confidence.

On **Sept. 13, 1937**, Florence R. (story in 1st edition Big Book "A Feminine Victory") is the first female AA in New York. She helped Fitz M. start Washington Group. She returned to drinking in 1949. One night, Fitz was called to identify her body at the Washington Morgue. She committed suicide.

On **Sept. 1938**, Fitz M. (AA No. 8 & story in Big Book "Our Southern Friend"), sister Agnes, lent Bill W. & Hank P. \$1,000.00 to help get them through the Big Book project. Also, Dr. Silkworth encouraged Charles Towns to loan \$2,500 to Bill & Hank. He later increased it to \$4,000.

In **Sept. 1940**, the Journal of Nervous & Mental Disease reviewed the AA Big Book and said "of the inner meaning of alcoholism there is hardly a word".

On **Sept. 22, 1944**, Dr. George Little transferred the distribution rights, which he had obtained in August 1942 from the AA Office in New York for the sale of the Big Book in Canada, to the Toronto AA Club. The Toronto AA Club opened on January 28, 1944, at 1170 Yonge St., a new committee every 3 months, the office is open every day & meetings are on Thursday nights.

In **Sept. 1948**, the August Grapevine announced that, based on a subscriber survey, the September issue would be in a new pocket-size 5 1/2" x 7 1/2" format of 32 pages.

In **Sept. 1948**, in this issue of the Grapevine, the Serenity Prayer was first printed & became a vital part of AA.

On **Sept. 17, 1957**, Re: Archives: Bill Wilson wrote, "It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion".

In **Sept. 1973**, the Archives was established at the General Service Office (GSO) in New York & Nell Wing, one of Bill's earliest secretaries, became the first archivist.

On **Sept. 19, 1975**, Jack Alexander, author of early Saturday Evening Post articles on AA, died. The March 1941 article creates a national sensation: AA membership will quadruple in one year from 2,000 to 8,000.

-Eddy G., GTA Archivist

Greater Toronto Area Groups That Started in September

September 6, 1979 - Stepping Stones Group.
September 7, 2010 - We Agnostics Group.
September 11, 1978 - Deer Park Group.
September 16, 1990 - Sunday Scarboro Group.
September 17, 1983 - Frontrunner's Group

September 17, 2007 - Prince Edward Group.
September 17, 1964 - Long Branch Group.
September 23, 1952 - St. Clements Group.
September 24, 2010 - We Agnostics Group.
September 27, 1947 - Danforth Group

1ST ANNUAL DISTRICT 02 UNITY IN RECOVERY Roundup

Day Ticket Includes:
Theatre Style Seating
Speakers
Self Serve Lunch
Social Room
Late Speaker & Dance
\$25

Full Day Includes:
Reserved Tables,
Speakers, Sit Down Lunch,
Social Room,
Sit Down Dinner,
Late Speaker & Dance
\$45

Al-Anon Family Groups
Ontario South Al-Anon/Alateen

Together, we can do what
we couldn't do alone.



Feature Speakers
Paul G. Akron, Ohio
Paul K. Bradford Al-Anon, Keswick, ON
Annie H. Black River Group, Sutton, ON
Roman R. Stepping Stones, Toronto, ON
Christina G. Akron, Ohio

Late Speaker
Deb H. Akron, Ohio

NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR

22 NOVEMBER 2025

**ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION
80 MARY ST. BRAMPTON, ON**

EVENT DETAILS

- Inspiring Speakers
- Gift Shop
- Early Bird Prize
- Social Room
- Door Prizes
- Fellowship
- 50/50 Draw
- Dinner
- Lunch
- DJ & Dance

AGENDA

9:00am - 10:00am	Registration
10:00am - 4:30pm	Speakers & Lunch
4:30pm - 6:00pm	Social Room
6:30pm - 7:50pm	Sit Down Dinner
7:50pm - 8:00pm	Welcome & Gratitude
8:05pm - 9:05pm	Late Speaker
9:15pm - 12:00am	Dance With DJ

INFO / TICKETS

Krishna D. 647-299-3138
Rexdale United Group

Maria M. 416-884-6529
Brampton Recovery Group

Ticket Sales Start August 1st / Early Bird Deadline is September 15th / Ticket Sales End November 1st
Limited Seating Available / Vegetarian Option Available / Location is Wheelchair Accessible

SEPTEMBER MEDALLIONS

Sept.03.2025 – 55 Years, Kumar B. Anniversary Group
Sept.04.2025 – 40 Years, Peter P. New Anchor Group
Sept.04.2025 – 1 Year, Michael C. Woodbridge Group
Sept.05.2025 – 40 Years, Bert J. Silver Birch Group
Sept.09.2025 – 1 Year, Hayley D., Downsview Group
Sept.12.2025 – 35 Years, Don W., Newcomers Meeting
Sept.18.2025 – 1 Year, Franca P., Woodbridge Group
Sept.22.2025 – 25 years, Meghan E., Erin Mills Group
Sept.25.2025 – 25 Years, Gabrielle M., New Anchor Group
Sept.29.2025 – 10 Years, John F., Erin Mills Group
Sept.29.2025 – 20 Years, Jim R., U of T Morning Discussion Group
Sept.30.2025 – 15 Years, Edward H., East York Group

WOMEN'S ROUND-UP

TORONTO WOMEN IN RECOVERY
SEPTEMBER 22, 2025
11AM TO 4 PM
THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREWS
2333 VICTORIA PARK AVENUE
TORONTO, ONTARIO

IS THERE AN UPCOMING MEDALLION?

Please send your medallion details to bettertimes@aatontario.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...)