

# Our Primary Purpose

[www.ottawaaa.org](http://www.ottawaaa.org)

Ottawa Area Intergroup of  
Alcoholics Anonymous 

**Stories, news and information from our fellowship  
in the National Capital Region**

## Is AA for you?



See inside for twelve questions only you can answer.  
Young and old, if you have a problem with alcohol you are  
welcome here!

## Is A.A. for you?

Twelve questions only you can answer. Answer yes or no to the following questions:



1. Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week or so, but only lasted for a couple of days?
2. Do you wish people would mind their own business about your drinking--stop telling you what to do?
3. Have you ever switched from one kind of drink to another in the hope that this would keep you from getting drunk?
4. Have you had to have a drink upon awakening during the past year?
5. Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?
6. Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year?
7. Has your drinking caused trouble at home?
8. Do you ever try to get "extra" drinks at a party because you do not get enough?
9. Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, even though you keep getting drunk when you don't mean to?
10. Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking?
11. Do you have "blackouts"?
12. Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drink?

### *Did you answer YES four or more times?*

If so, you are probably in trouble with alcohol. Why do we say this? Because thousands of people in A.A. have said so for many years. They found out the truth about themselves, the hard way. **Only you can decide whether you think A.A. is for you. Try to keep an open mind on the subject. If the answer is YES, we will be glad to show you how we stopped drinking ourselves. Just call.**

A.A. does not promise to solve your life's problems. But we can show you how we are learning to live without drinking "one day at a time." We stay away from that "first drink." If there is no first one, there cannot be a tenth one. And when we got rid of alcohol, we found that life became much more manageable.

### **Take the next step**

You can call a local A.A. office to ask more questions or to talk to an A.A. member. You can attend a meeting in person or online. There is no disgrace in facing up to the fact that you have a problem.



# New Year's Resolution Again...

EVERY year towards the end of my drinking I would always promise and boast that one of my New Year's resolutions would be either to stop drinking altogether, stop drinking for January, only drink at weekends or whatever unrealistic plan I had put together. I had this intense longing and desire to be a normal drinker and felt that what was holding me back was my apparent lack of willpower - a huge weakness in my eyes. How little did I understand about alcoholism at this point. So as Christmas approached each year, my plan was to drink as much as I could throughout the festive period and then stop. However, reality was very different. How could I not drink on January 1st, my husband's birthday? Surely that was allowed? Hence, I failed before I began!

Now Christmas and New Year are very different. Thanks to the wisdom of Alcoholics Anonymous, I now treat every day as the same and focus on twenty-four hours at a time. I don't project to the future anymore or worry about how I will get

through occasions of celebration, of disappointment or just average normal days without a drink. I remember in the early days of recovery how important it was to follow the simple suggestions given to me by my sponsor - to pray each morning for a sober day, to read AA literature, to phone her regularly, to speak to others in the Fellowship, to help the newcomer, to write a gratitude list and to thank my Higher Power at the end of each day for my continuing sobriety. These are still suggestions that I carry out today and still do throughout the festive period as I would any other day.

I remember in the early days that it was vital to keep myself safe over the Christmas period so I avoided the work Christmas 'do', any New Year parties, and just enjoyed a quiet family time. It was difficult, but it was important to shield myself from any unnecessary pressure and temptation. Even today, I still find that it is best for my recovery to avoid social occasions where drinking is the main focus. I also tend to avoid any festive food with

alcohol as I do not wish to provide opportunity for temptation and it is easy to purchase alternatives without alcohol.

My main tip throughout the festive period is to keep connected to AA. It is easy to allow oneself to isolate. We suffer with an illness that tells us often that we don't have an illness. I always keep connected to the Fellowship through regular meetings, conversations, prayer with my Higher Power and through my AA readings. This is vital for me every day, but particularly so over Christmas. I am immensely grateful to AA for my continuing sobriety one day at a time. I now have a life beyond my wildest dreams. I wish you all a very happy and sober Christmas and New Year.

*SARAH M, Kent*

Taken from [alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)



# *Intergroup News*

Ottawa Area Intergroup elections were held at the December Intergroup meeting. The following members have been elected to various Intergroup positions: Paul D. Webmaster; Stephan P. Treasurer; Kerri D. Eastern Ontario Conference Chairperson (EOC); Kevin O. Vice-Chair (EOC); Steve R. 12Step Coordinator. Names have been put forward since the elections for secretary and literature coordinator. These will be voted in tentatively at the January Intergroup meeting.

A motion to hire a technical support person for the Board was passed.

The Board is searching for a location to hold Intergroup meetings as hybrid meetings (on-line & in-person).

Intergroup reps play a key role in relating Intergroup activities back to the group and vice versa. If your group does not have a rep, please consider electing one or volunteering yourself!



## From the AA Archives: Saturday Morning Big Book Group

The Saturday Morning Big Book Group meeting takes place on Saturday mornings from 9:30am to 10:30am, at St Stephens Church (579 Parkdale Ave.). It is a closed discussion meeting which begins with a reading from the Big Book followed by an open floor discussion with all group participants. The group reads the entirety of the Big Book (Fourth Edition), starting each reading from where the previous meeting ended. Members form the Saturday Morning Big Book Group can request to celebrate their anniversary on any Saturday, during or around, the month of their sober date. The member celebrating must provide the group with at least one week of notification of the date they wish to celebrate. The celebrant can choose to have a speaker meeting or a regular meeting. They are requested to provide a speaker if they choose a speaker format.

The group was registered with the General Service Office on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1988. It is currently unknown who the founding members of the group were. The group has always been called the Saturday Morning Big Book Group and has never changed locations. However, the meeting originally took place from 11:00am to 12pm. Current long-time members have been informed that the meeting had originally had a high attendance rate (somewhere between 20 and 30 participants). When a larger number of participants attended, the group would decide to break up into smaller discussion groups after the Big Book reading portion of the meeting.

It is known that by the year 2000 an AA member named "Big Dave" was a con-

sistent attendee of the Saturday Morning Big Book Group. Current members state that Big Dave was highly dedicated to serving AA and this group in particular. As an ex-military bookkeeper, he was chosen to be the group's treasurer. During this time period the meeting averaged approximately 8 and 10 participants. Sometime in 2001 Big Dave passed away – it is told that his funeral required a second room be opened to allow for all those who attended. Linda R. took over as the group's treasurer and she remains the treasurer to this day. After Big Dave's passing, a man named Ray was handed the keys to the meeting and he took on many service roles for the good of the group.

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2002 The Westboro Big Book Study meeting was formed. This meeting took place at 9am every Saturday (and still does to this day). Many participants who attended the Saturday Morning Big Book Group started attending the Westboro Big Book Study meeting as they preferred the earlier start time and it was less than three kilometers away. On many Saturdays between 2002 and 2008 it was not uncommon to find four people or less at the Saturday Morning Big Book Group. Sometimes Ray would be the only person at the meeting. The Saturday Morning Big Book Group came very close to closing its doors many times during this time period. Members like Ray, Linda R., and Dave C. (an active

member of the group today), were able to keep the meeting alive. Ray eventually moved to other meetings but other members like Paul B. (an active member of the group today) joined. Paul eventually took over as the holder of the key for the group. The group's numbers slowly increased and today it averages between 6 to 12 participants per meeting.

Some highlights and notable moments of the group include, hosting a 5am meeting slot for the Alkathon (sometime around 2008), reading the First Edition of the Big Book (cover to cover) in 2018, changing its meeting time to 9:30am in January 2019, and shifting to a virtual Zoom meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 (thanks to Dick G. who provided the Zoom account for the group to use).

The Saturday Morning Big Book Group is known as a small closed meeting in Ottawa. On most occasions all attendees have the opportunity to read and share during the meeting. Newcomers are always welcomed with "Hello's" and a handshake or hug. You will be lucky to attend on a day where Linda R. brings in her fresh baked chocolate chip cookies to share with the group.



## More from the AA Archives: The Spirit of Hope

The Spirit of Hope was founded by John P., David T. and Susan T.. Our first meeting was held at St. John's Church on Elgin Street in October of 1993.

John P. had been facilitating a step series there similar to the Friday night at St. Basel's started by his sponsor John G. There was no Big Book discussion meeting in the Centertown area at the time so it was decided to open one at St. John's on Elgin Street on Sunday nights at 7:30pm. The group was well attended and grew rapidly. Along came Darlene B. to bake the birthday cakes, Marlene L., Michael B. from Tennessee and many others to help the group grow in size and strength. For close to 15 years we offered a 30 minute meditation together. Though there are a few meditation groups around these days, the idea of it being part of the meeting format obviously never caught on as we had hoped. Thanks to members like Rick H. and Philip D., we are happy to say that today the group is still alive and thriving, with long term members carrying the A.A. message and helping to guide others toward sobriety.

### New Printable Meeting List Page Added to the Website

The main navigation menu at the top of each page under the menu heading **Welcome** has been updated to include a new option called **Print a Meeting List**.

You can visit the page directly at <https://ottawaaa.org/printable-in-person-meeting-list/>. Click the button to generate a real-time printable list of in-person meetings.

Be sure to check back often since the list changes as new meetings are added or existing meetings are updated.

### Sobriety in AA: When drinking is no longer a party

Go to [aa.org](https://aa.org) for this short video.

#### Need help with a drinking problem?

A.A. has a solution. That isn't an empty promise. A.A. has been helping alcoholics recover for more than 80 years. A.A.'s program of recovery is built on the simple foundation of one alcoholic sharing with another. If your drinking is out of control, A.A. can help.



## 2023 CARRY THE MESSAGE PROJECT

### Give a Gift Subscription

to an alcoholic who needs it.

Great for:

- Sponsees • Newcomers
- Prisons • Detoxes
- Doctors' Offices • Group Celebrations • District and Area Events • Giveaways



# WANT TO HELP ANOTHER ALCOHOLIC?

### Grapevine & La Viña are Great Twelfth Step Tools!

Get your group, district, area or  
AA friends to join in. Carry the  
Message, it's easy!

Go to [aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message](https://aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message) to get started and see  
our new Carry the message video at  
[www.youtube.com/c/AAGrapevine](https://www.youtube.com/c/AAGrapevine)



# Pearls of Wisdom

This column features simple pearls of wisdom which have been imparted to me and others over the years. These statements are in no particular order in our recovery or of importance:

Help is only a phone call away.

You can't give away what you don't have.

Half measures availed us nothing.

Anger is one letter away from danger.

Courage to change.

Easy does it, but DO it.

The first step in overcoming mistakes is to admit them.

Accept your admission.

Remember when.

Fear is the darkroom where negatives are developed.

You want what you want when you want it.

There is no chemical solution to a spiritual problem.

A.A. is not something you join, it's a way of life.

Spirituality is the ability to get our minds off ourselves.

Faith is spelled a-c-t-i-o-n.

Stay in the main tent, and out of the sideshow.



**Please submit your Pearls of Wisdom to: [newsletter@ottawaaa.org](mailto:newsletter@ottawaaa.org) Thank you for your service!**



Alcoholics  
Anonymous®

[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

## General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10115 / Telephone: (212) 870-3400



Please direct all  
communications to:  
P.O. Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163  
Fax: (212) 870-3003

Warm greetings to all,

The General Service Office US/Canada, at the request of the Canadian Corrections Working Group, are putting out a Call to Action for all trusted servants in Canada. We have been charged with increasing the awareness and participation of the Corrections Correspondence Service in Canada among those **members who are in custody**.

Please share this sign-up form (link <https://www.aa.org/corrections-correspondence-service-insider-request-form>) with the members in custody at the correctional setting(s) you are serving. We have a pre-stamped envelope available for the person in custody to use when returning the envelope to the GSO to defray the cost of postage. If you need more envelopes, please contact the GSO.

You may know we assign participant matches: intra-country, i.e., US with US and Canada with Canada, to make sure members in custody can participate without the burden of international postage.

We have a waitlist of outside A.A. members waiting to participate in CCS, which is another reason why we want to increase participation by members behind the walls.

Please reach out to [corrections@aa.org](mailto:corrections@aa.org) with any questions.

Yours in love and service,

Eileen A., Corrections Coordinator



## 34<sup>th</sup> International Men's Conference 2023

### Washington DC

**"Keeping the Legacy ALIVE 2023 and BEYOND"**

[www.IAAMC-DC23.org](http://www.IAAMC-DC23.org)

**When:** April 21-23, 2023

**Where:** The Doubletree by Hilton Crystal City

300 Army Navy Drive, Arlington VA, 22202

<https://book.passkey.com/go/AAMensConference>

Make room reservations **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** due to **limited rooms availability** at \$149.00 per night. **For Room Reservations:** Call (703) 416-4100. Use **Promo Code:** IAA and mention IAA to receive conference rate of **\$149.00** (plus tax per night) visit our webpage: [www.IAAMC-DC23.org](http://www.IAAMC-DC23.org)

**for more information contacts:**

Chair	Lee M.	(202) 441-0111	<a href="mailto:Chair.IAAMCDC23@gmail.com">Chair.IAAMCDC23@gmail.com</a>
Co-chair	Willie S.	(301) 257-3320	<a href="mailto:Co-chair.IAAMCDC23@gmail.com">Co-chair.IAAMCDC23@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Stan C.	(301) 598-5953	<a href="mailto:Treasurer.IAAMCDC23@gmail.com">Treasurer.IAAMCDC23@gmail.com</a>

### Conference Registration Options

<b>Reserve Banquet AS SOON AS POSSIBLE Due to Limited Seating</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Amount</b>
General registration and banquet <i>(Circle your meat choice: Salmon, chicken or sliced pork tenderloin, vegetarian)</i>	\$ 120.00	_____	_____
Registration Only	\$ 50.00	_____	_____
Tour of Washington, DC by Motor Coach	\$ 39.00	_____	_____
Ball Cap	\$ 17.00	_____	_____
Tee-shirt (sizes Large to 5X): State size: _____ (sizes run small)	\$ 23.00	_____	_____
Donate to the 34 <sup>th</sup> IAAMC 2023			_____
	<b>Total</b>		_____

**please visit our website for details and updates @ [www.IAAMC-DC23.org](http://www.IAAMC-DC23.org)**

**Mail Registration to:** IAAMC-DC23, PO Box 12226, Silver Spring, MD 20906-1548

**Make check or money order payable to:** IAAMC-DC23 or register online using our webpage: [www.IAAMC-DC23.org](http://www.IAAMC-DC23.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Group: \_\_\_\_\_

**Meal Preference:** \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Badges Required for ALL Sessions**



## Ottawa Intergroup Office

211 Bronson Avenue, Suite 108  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 6H5  
Office temporarily closed.  
Curbside pickup Saturday 2-4pm  
Telephone: (613) 237-6000  
Email: [info@ottawaaa.org](mailto:info@ottawaaa.org)

Newsletter Coordinator  
[newsletter@ottawaaa.org](mailto:newsletter@ottawaaa.org)  
Article submission deadline is  
the 20th day of the month  
preceding publication date

## Ottawa Area Intergroup

Chair – Mary K.  
Vice-Chair – John D.  
Secretary – vacant  
Treasurer – Stephan P.  
Website – Paul D.  
Telephone Answering– Eric S.  
Literature – vacant  
12-Step Coordinator– Steve R.  
Spring Conference – vacant  
Eastern Ontario Conference– Kerri D.  
Newsletter – Dawn-Marie M.

[chair@ottawaaa.org](mailto:chair@ottawaaa.org)  
[vice@ottawaaa.org](mailto:vice@ottawaaa.org)  
[secretary@ottawaaa.org](mailto:secretary@ottawaaa.org)  
[treasurer@ottawaaa.org](mailto:treasurer@ottawaaa.org)  
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[12step@ottawaaa.org](mailto:12step@ottawaaa.org)  
[spring@ottawaaa.org](mailto:spring@ottawaaa.org)  
[eoc@ottawaaa.org](mailto:eoc@ottawaaa.org)  
[newsletter@ottawaaa.org](mailto:newsletter@ottawaaa.org)

## Ottawa General Service Districts and Committees

District 54 – Ottawa East – Kevin O.  
District 62 – Ottawa West – Trevor F.  
Cooperation with Professionals - Jo D.  
Public Information/Media Contact - Jo D.  
Corrections Facilities & Treatment - Elaine H.  
Archives – Andrew F.

[district54@ottawaaa.org](mailto:district54@ottawaaa.org)  
[district62@ottawaaa.org](mailto:district62@ottawaaa.org)  
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[pi@ottawaaa.org](mailto:pi@ottawaaa.org)  
[cft@ottawaaa.org](mailto:cft@ottawaaa.org)  
[archives@ottawaaa.org](mailto:archives@ottawaaa.org)

# SERVICE CALENDAR

*Online meeting logistics are shown for committees that have provided it.*

No matter how much sobriety you have, you can help and be part of the greater whole. All AA members are welcome to attend any of the following committees:

**OTTAWA INTERGROUP MONTHLY MEETING**..... Second Wednesday (7:00 pm)  
([ZOOM Meeting ID 824 3878 6359 Passcode OAIG2020](#))

**DISTRICT 54 MEETING**..... First Thursday (6:30 pm)  
([ZOOM Meeting ID 834 9953 9650 Passcode 141892](#))

**DISTRICT 58 MEETING\* Discontinued. Please contact District 54 or District 62.**

**DISTRICT 62 MEETING**..... Second Monday (7:30 pm)  
([ZOOM Meeting ID 638 562 068 Passcode 016224](#))

**CORRECTIONS FACILITIES AND TREATMENT**..... Fourth Tuesday (6:30 pm)  
([Zoom Meeting ID 815 5183 4935 Passcode 521429](#))

**PUBLIC INFORMATION/ COOPERATION WITH PROFESSIONALS**..... Third Monday (6:30 pm)  
([ZOOM Meeting ID 815 4385 6025 Passcode PICPC](#))

**OTTAWA ARCHIVES**..... Third Wednesday (7:00 pm)  
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue-Room 108 (in-person meetings suspended))

**Is your AA Group's meeting information correct on [ottawaaa.org](http://ottawaaa.org)?** Please send all updates as well as temporary closures to Ottawa Intergroup at [info@ottawaaa.org](mailto:info@ottawaaa.org).

**Do you have a question for the Intergroup board?** Please email us with your questions and you can also request an invitation to meet with us at our monthly virtual board meeting. Send your email to [chair@ottawaaa.org](mailto:chair@ottawaaa.org).

**If your group needs insurance,** please contact Ottawa Intergroup at [info@ottawaaa.org](mailto:info@ottawaaa.org) to discuss.

"Our Primary Purpose" publishes articles reflecting the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In determining content, the newsletter coordinator relies on the principles of the Twelve Traditions. "Our Primary Purpose" values the shared experience of individual AA members working the AA program and applying the principles of the Twelve Steps. It neither seeks to gloss over difficult issues, nor to present such issues in a harmful or contentious manner. "Our Primary Purpose" tries to embody the widest possible view of the AA Fellowship.

*The newsletter coordinator of "Our Primary Purpose" reserves the right to accept or reject material for publication, based on the AA traditions. Note: this policy is consistent with that of the AA Grapevine.*

*Articles are not intended to be statements of AA policy, nor does publication of any article constitute endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or Ottawa Area Intergroup. Submissions are always welcome!*