

Our Primary Purpose

www.ottawaaa.org

Ottawa Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous 

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



**I'll quit when
I'm older.
How old is
that
anyway?**

**Doesn't everyone drink like I do?
Why do all my friends drink like me?
Is that all we have in common?**

**I'm too young to stop drinking. Aren't I?
I will never have fun in life if I don't drink.**

Message from the Chairperson of Ottawa Area Intergroup

Dear Intergroup Reps and AA Members,

It's with mixed emotions that I'm writing to tell you that it's time for me to go home; and Toronto is home to me. I need to go home and be with family, and old and new friends. I will be leaving Ottawa in early April; March 8th will be my last Intergroup meeting as Chair.

For the past year a friend of mine in Toronto has been helping me find an apartment in an area where I'd like to live and within my budget. This has been very challenging. About 10 days ago, an opportunity presented itself and I signed a lease for April 1st.

As per our Policies and Procedures the Vice Chair, John D, will assume the position of Chair on March 9th. John D. will easily transition into the Chair position for Intergroup. You have a Board of Directors who are talented, dedicated, experienced and competent; you will be in very good hands.

The election to fill the vacant Vice Chair position will take place during the April 12th Intergroup meeting. The basic responsibility of the Vice Chair is to understudy the Chair position so they can easily transition into the Chair position.

I want to thank the Intergroup Reps for your dedicated service to AA. Your participation at Intergroup meetings is so important. You are the Group Conscience of AA representing your groups. Continue to state your opinions. Your love of AA has re-energized my love of AA. Thank you so much for allowing me to serve as your Intergroup Chair for the past 15 months. It has been an honor to know you and work with you.

But I really need to go home now.

With Lots of Love and Caring,
Mary K., Chair, Ottawa Intergroup

Group Conscience—The Voice of AA

Seems to me that the idea of developing a group conscience for all important decisions is relatively unique to A.A. Other organizations that I've belonged to might have come close at times, but usually to address items of minor importance.

It can take considerable time to develop an informed group conscience. In practice, we sometimes go to great lengths to ensure that our members are well informed before asking them to decide on an important question. Normally, decisions require substantial unanimity to succeed. Substantial unanimity usually means at least a 2/3rd majority but can sometimes be even more than 2/3rd if the group so decides. When it comes to matters affecting our ability to carry the message, I believe we naturally tend to want as much group unity as possible.

Items where the group is split down the middle seem to be the hardest to deal with. I once experienced a marathon group discussion (over 2 hours) to address the question of ceramic mugs versus Styrofoam cups. The group eventually reached a compromise solution of providing both and letting the individual members choose their preference.

At business meetings we normally invite all who have a voice to share their views and then wait until everyone has had a turn before speaking again to ensure all perspectives are heard and understood before going to a vote. When called for, we sometimes limit the amount of time for each member to share so that all voices will have the chance to be heard.

Even after a vote is taken, if it's not unanimous, we invite the losing side to share the reasons for their position and, after they have shared, ask if anyone on the winning side would like to reconsider their vote as a result. If only one person on the winning answers yes, then the group, if they wish, can decide to reopen the discussion, and take another vote. As it says in Bill's writing on Concept 5 "The well-heard minority, therefore, is our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority."

Clint M.

References:

Twelve and Twelve - Tradition 2
A.A.W.S. Pamphlet - The A.A. Group
Twelve Concepts for World Services – Concepts 3,4,5 and 12 (Warranty 4)
Ottawa Area Intergroup Association Policies and Procedures Manual

Youthful Expressions on Step Two

I recently attended a meeting in person in Ottawa where young people were discussing Step Two, “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.” It was very worthwhile and I would like to share some lessons from it.

People were in a struggle to believe – to believe that something could help. Most were coming from a space that had little to do with spirituality, Christianity, Church or organized religion. Interestingly, in 2023, this is similar to how people have always come to AA since the 1930s. Just as the Big Book asks on p. 47, “Am I willing to believe?” People at the meeting were asking the same question and working it out in their own way – with confidence. They did not lack hope – they exemplified what the Book says on p. 54 that “we had some kind of confidence, some kind of faith”.

One newcomer was struggling to understand what her Higher Power and recovery are or should be – but that coming to AA and listening helped. Another spoke of trying to follow her intuition - whatever that is. Another was stuck on Step Two because of past traumas. But she came to realize that she indeed is worthy of being helped by a power greater than herself. They all confirmed what the Big Book says - in AA “the realm of the Spirit is broad, roomy and inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek.” (p.46)

People reported miracles, some little, some big. One said simply by being in the rooms he had a sense that a truth exists beyond his own will. Another said that the guiding principles of AA were his Higher Power; that recovery was about action – “you are what you do”; it’s not a straight

road; it’s crucial to stop disbelieving and to start to learn to let go. Another said that things changed dramatically when he realized that a Higher Power could be anything as long as it is not him. Now his life is way different – he woke up one morning 60 days sober, amazed, and said “if that’s not a Higher Power I don’t know what is”.

People reported other experiences of restoration to sanity. For one, it was his use of that quintessential recovery tool, the telephone. He placed a call, had a good conversation and healing happened – no more old, insane, angry self. Another said he was learning not to act on first impulse but instead to say “thy will be done, not mine”. The tools of the program helped him let difficult moments pass and learn humility and gratitude.

My Higher Power is my Christian faith - but that alone did not stop me from drinking – AA did. This recent meeting showed yet again the truth of the Second Step Promise, found on p. 57: “When we drew near to Him, He disclosed Himself to us!” And again, as it says (p.47), “when...we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God.”

Yours truly, aiming to
remain teachable,

John C.



One Day at a Time

Your course is set, blue sky days for fishing in the summer, a motorcycle to ride in the mountains, and a good paying job in the winter. The toys are paid for, the work is seasonal so there's lots of time off and sobriety is maintained by working with others, attending meetings and visits with your Sponsor. Then a new card is dealt: health. What do you mean it's cancer and I'll need surgery? Whew the operation was successful. I didn't need a prostate and with drugs we can suppress the cancer. Remission is a wonderful word, like the daily reprieve.

Back to living fishing, riding, skiing, work, meetings etc. The prognosis is good, great if you're an optimist. Two to five years trouble free just take the shots every 3 months and a few blood tests.

Boom- two years went fast, sober and enjoying a life of being single, joyous and free, just like the book says. That pain in my right leg is getting annoying, and now it's getting so I can't walk and I need pain meds to get to sleep. I can't fish, I can't get into my truck at work, or the loader it's just too high. Visit the oncologist and the cancer has returned. Radiation- round two, the first line of attack, followed by more drugs. Good thing I gave up drinking seven years ago, nearly every drug they want me to take says cut

back or stop alcohol consumption. The next step is chemotherapy but the drugs are making me sick and I can't eat, I can't walk without a cane and I'm getting weaker by the day. What next, if this continues I won't be able to care for myself. I won't get

through a winter in the mountains, I can barely stand to cook or shop and it's getting worse.

Reach out to others, ask for help. That's not what I do. I'm the strong one, able to help the newcomer. I'm strong. Not so much, I'm losing strength, and I have to accept the reality of life on life's terms. Accept help, be the recipient. Talk about roles being reversed, I have to seek help and do so quickly. Family has not played a significant role in my life for many years, they live in their part of the country and I live in mine. Visits are few and far between. I have come to enjoy my solitary day to day life. I have a life of adventurers, trips, seasonal work and comrades who accept my solitary ways.

Well this is about to change, and fast. The first choice of family care is my sister across the country, who has offered in the past to help. I've never needed help, ever and this is going to be major serious long term help. A complete commitment of yes you can care for me. I'm so sick I can't care for myself and I'm going downhill. The responsibility pledge talks about reaching out and the hand of AA. But now I have to reach out. Good thing I have an AA sister, of course she's all in to help to change her life for my care. My gratitude is immeasurable. I'm get-

ting worse by the day and 911 has to be called. What happened to a simple life of sobriety, in such a short time the toys were sold, independence lost and even the ability to walk. Hospitalization for 2 months, major surgery just to relieve the pain and six weeks of physio to learn to walk with a fused spine. Surgery relieved the pain and removed a tumor. The oncologists attending feel my cancer can be treated, my life will continue albeit a different lifestyle. I have the option to practice these principles in all my affairs, get my butt into some area of service and show my gratitude by helping others. The formula is simple. Trust God, clean house and help others. The hard part for me to understand was that, as I receive help I'm helping the person and persons giving of themselves. God has a heck of a way to teach, and some lessons are hard to swallow but I've learned more about love, acceptance, and patience than I would have with a life of continued good health. The journey I was on has changed dramatically. I'm the receiver of care not the care taker. Such a reversal of roles. I gave up my motorcycle for a wheelchair, walker and cane.

AA provided the toolkit, prayer built the relationship with HP, willingness to ask others saved the day. I don't ask why me, as the answer will just be a guess, but I do ask what do I do now. As I recover I can get involved with TAS and take the occasional open shift, I can attend a few meetings when I ask for rides from members who are more than willing, I can work with my new sponsor to review the steps, read the big book again. I can live this new life that God is giving me - One day at a time.

Scott F.

Telephone Answering Service

Front Lines!

Be on the front lines from the comfort of your own home! You can be the first contact for many people with a drinking problem. The TAS volunteer's job is to connect a 12-Step Call member with someone who calls asking for help. The duties also include giving meeting information and answering other types of inquiries.

An opportunity do rewarding service!

Ottawa Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous 



Contact Eric S.: tas@ottawaaa.org



Came to Believe

Robert M., 1955

Would you like to help people? Are you familiar with the 12th Step?

Step 12.

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Steve R., is Ottawa Area Intergroup's (OAIG) new 12 Step Co-Ordinator where he organises and maintains a list of people who have the time to take a phone call from another person seeking help with their drinking.

The call may consist of simply answering questions about A.A. or options that are in the area for "in-person" and "online" meetings. Or the call may be simply listening and being a calm kind ear to the person on the call.

If this Service Opportunity interests you, or others, please contact our OAIG 12 Step Coordinator Steve R at

12step@ottawaaa.org

12 Step Volunteers

Hello friends I'm an alcoholic and my name is Steve R. I'm the 12 Step coordinator for Ottawa Area Intergroup. I've been tasked with rebuilding the 12 Step responders' list, which is directly linked to the Telephone Answering Service. The purpose of this list is to provide those answering the phones access to a member to aid the caller in the best way possible.

The former list contained 90 members across the Ottawa area. After reaching out to everyone on the list, I have since removed 43 names. At the same time I've added 4 new members, bringing our total to 51. Additional volunteers are desperately needed. There is a real need for younger people with a desire to do service. I can be contacted at 12step@ottawaaa.org.

Please provide me with your name and last initial, postal code and desired phone number as well as your home group, if possible. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have about this service. Your information will be stored in a secure area under the service login tab of the ottawaaa.org website for TAS volunteers.

Thank you in advance for your service!
Steve R.

From the AA Archives: Women in Step Group

Founded March 3, 2010

The Women in Step Group began on March 3, 2010. It was started by a woman member who was looking for a west end meeting for women, found none, so started this Group.

We meet once a week on Wednesday's at 7:30 pm at City View United Church in the west end of Ottawa. The first meeting had fifteen women and has since kept attracting more women members. At most meetings, we now have 20-25 women.

The Group discusses the Twelve Steps. We have a Beginner's group meeting for Steps 1-3 and the remaining members go into a separate room to discuss one of the Steps. We keep a log of where we left off, so we eventually get through the whole book. On the first of the month, we discuss a Tradition that corresponds to the month we are in, i.e., in April we will be on the Fourth Tradition. The last Wednesday

of the month we have celebrations. The person celebrating can either choose an Open Speaker Meeting or a Closed Discussion Meeting.

We have our Business Meeting at the beginning of the month. We currently have an Intergroup Representative, a General Service Representative and a Treasurer. We are in District 62.

In April 2020, the meeting was moved online to Zoom due to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

We have now returned to in person meetings at 7:30pm on Wednesday, at the City View United Church.



The OPP Creative Corner

The Creative Corner was created during the pandemic as people had more time to reflect and be creative. It's a place where AA members can share their talents and creativity. Send us your poetry, your paintings or your photographs. Send to newsletter@ottawaaa.org.

I Am Qualified

By Zachary H.

It was not often that I sat by the phone
Wishing that I were not best left alone
Most of the time I'd turn inward and think
And that was when I would have a good ol' drink

One Sunday I drank 18 tall cans of beer
I could have died, which was everyone's fear
But the very next day I went straight into work
Like what had happened was just a little quirk

Another time, when I drank 'til I blacked out
I had a bottle of whisky, which I don't like to tout
I should have been training that night at the gym
Trying to explain my absence, oh where would I begin?

I can't remember why I quit, but surely it was tough
The very first year felt like it was really truly rough
But after one birthday, I left the rooms of A.A.
I have no excuse, there's not much more I can say

But now I'm back to make up for time that I missed
I won't drink again, that's just what I've promised
Life for me right now is truly not all that sweet
Yet without A.A. I might be living out on the street

I hope to God that "The Promises" come true
Since from time to time, I can certainly feel blue
However, I hope that I can get through all this strife
And that A.A. might be able to give me back my life



January 21, 2023

Greetings Members of Area 83.

Each spring, the General Service Conference takes place in New York. The Conference is made up of 93 Area Delegates, the Trustees and Directors of A.A. World Services and Grapevine, and the General Service Office Staff.

The General Service Conference is the annual business meeting for Alcoholics Anonymous and the focus of the Conference are the Agenda items for each of the 13 Conference committees. The major work of the Conference is done during these committee meetings where comprehensive background information is reviewed and deliberated for each agenda item.

Conference committees discuss numerous issues of interest to the Fellowship as a whole and come up with recommendations. Some recommendations result in Conference Advisory Actions. Not all Conference discussions become Advisory Actions. Some important matters addressed at the Conference result in "additional considerations" - more informal suggestions and guidance on how best to carry the message.

"As voting members of the Conference, Delegates bring to its deliberations the experiences and viewpoints of their own areas." "Delegates are charged with understanding the experiences, viewpoints, and group conscience of their areas, while assuming responsibility for the U.S./Canada Conference as a whole" (Service manual page 32 2021-23 edition). **You, as a member of Area 83 play an important role in providing our Delegate with experiences and viewpoints to take to the General Service Conference (GSC).**

We are inviting you to be part of the decision-making process and to share your input on the items that will be discussed. Your views and ideas will be collected and shared with our Delegate who will represent Area 83 at the 73rd Annual General Service Conference 1 April 2023.

When:

Sharing Session will be held Saturday 1 April 2023

Other important dates:

Spring Assembly: **14-16 April 2023** (hybrid platform)

73rd General Service Conference: **April 23-29, 2023**

You can play an important role in this exciting process!!!



OTTAWA WITHDRAWAL
MANAGEMENT WELCOMES
BACK ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS!

From Bill and Bob's first visits to suffering alcoholics in hospitals and institutions in 1942 until the present day, AA has ceaselessly carried the message of hope and recovery to the alcoholic who is confined.

This is an opportunity to carry this life saving message. We urge you to join in our efforts to perform this vital work by volunteering to host service meetings at Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre (OWMC), its two transition homes (Maison Billy Buffet and Maison Gilles Chagnon) and the Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC). For all new and returning volunteers, the Committee and members are here to help you every step of the way.

Practical experience shows that nothing will so much ensure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. ("Alcoholics Anonymous" pg. 89). AA members and groups who want to strengthen their sobriety or who want more AA joy in their lives are encouraged to get their names on the list as soon as possible! Sign up at cft@ottawaaa.org or owmc@ottawaaa.org. If you do not have access to a computer, please call the Ottawa Intergroup Office at 613-237-6000 and they will forward your information to the Corrections and Treatment Facilities (CFT) committee.

Suggested preparation would include:

The Corrections Workbook (https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/M-45i_en_1221_0.pdf) The Treatment Workbook (https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/m-40i_TFWorkbook.pdf) and Suggestions for Leading Beginners Meetings (https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/mu-1_suggforleadingbegmeet.pdf)

Paper copies can be arranged noting that printing delays at the General Service Office are ongoing.

Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC) has been able to invite screened volunteers to re-enter, but we continue to seek member support. Please email cft@ottawaaa.org if you are interested.

**Thank you, Merci, Gracias for all literature contributions! Keep them coming! All General Service Office (GSO) approved literature is needed in all facilities including Grapevine and Grapevine Books, Living Sober, As Bill Sees It, Daily Reflections, etc.
*Please note OCDC can accept soft covered books only.**

"This is where it all begins."

PRE-CONFERENCE AGENDA SHARING (PCAS)

AREA 83 PRE-CONFERENCE AGENDA SHARING (PCAS)

CONFERENCEThe Three Legacies of A.A. –
Our Common Solutions

PRE-CONFERENCE AGENDA SHARING PCAS

Area 83
Pre-Conference
Agenda Sharing**EVENT DETAILS**

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***DISTRICT 66, GOLDEN TRIANGLE
39TH ANNUAL ROUNDUP
Lombardy Agricultural Hall
6 Kellys Rd., Lombardy, ON
Saturday, April 8, 2023***



"Is My Triangle Balanced?"

***Doors open at 11:30 a.m.
Round-Up starts at 12:15 p.m.
AA and Al-Anon Panels
Presentations, 7th Tradition
Sobriety Countdown, Guest Speaker
Potluck Dinner***



***Questions? E-mail:
roundupchair@lanarkleedsaa.org***

**CORNWALL
SUNDAY TRIANGLE GROUP
1st Annual Roundup
Saturday July 1st, 2023**

Start time: 11:00am until 6:00pm

Speakers:

11:30am Bryan W.- chute à Blondeau

12:45pm Father Paul J. - Ottawa

2:00pm Bob C. - Montréal

3:00pm Frank O. - Ottawa

4:10pm Light dinner served

**For more information call
Claude P. 613 362 7513 or
Steph L. 613 577 3088.**

For extra info, checkout: cornwallaa.com

**Cornwall Sunday Triangle
Group
Centre Charles-Emile Claude
146b Chevrier Ave, Cornwall,
ON K6H 1S1**

**PLEASE BRING OR CONSIDER A FOOD DONATION
AS YOUR 7TH TRADITION GIFT**



Ottawa Intergroup Office

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Newsletter Coordinator
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 – Dick G.
Treasurer – Stephan P.
Website – Paul D.
Telephone Answering– Eric S.
Literature – Walter H.
12-Step Coordinator– Steve R.
Spring Conference – vacant
Eastern Ontario Conference– Kerri D.
Newsletter – Dawn-Marie M.

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spring@ottawaaa.org
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Ottawa General Service Districts and Committees

District 54 – Ottawa East – Kevin O. district54@ottawaaa.org
District 62 – Ottawa West – Jamie B. district62@ottawaaa.org
Cooperation with Professionals - Chris M. cpc@ottawaaa.org
Public Information/Media Contact - Chris M. pi@ottawaaa.org
Corrections Facilities & Treatment - Elaine H. cft@ottawaaa.org
Archives – Andrew F. 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..... Fourth Monday (7pm)

([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? Please send all updates as well as temporary closures to Ottawa Intergroup at 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.

If your group needs insurance, please contact Ottawa Intergroup at 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!