

# 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**

## October—10th month—10th Step!



An honest regret for  
harms done, a genuine  
gratitude for blessings  
received...

AA 12 & 12 Step Ten p.95

**Countdown to the Eastern Ontario Conference October 20/21, 2023**

**See complete schedule inside!**

# 69th Annual Eastern Ontario Conference 2023

**It works—it really does.**

**October 20-21, 2023**

## Scheduled Events—Main Conference Room

### Friday, October 20, 2023

10am—Registration  
 11am—Panel—The Common Good  
 1pm—Al-Anon Topic TBD  
 2:30pm—Panel-No Mental Defense  
 3:30pm—Panel-Group of Principles  
 5pm—Shotgun Meeting— Peggy F.  
 6:30pm—Conference Opening remarks  
 7pm—Opening Speaker meeting—  
 Marty C. Hamilton ON  
 9pm—Friday Night Comedy featuring  
 Stand Up Comedian Bobby K. followed  
 by a Speaker meeting— Amanda B.  
 Ottawa, ON

### Saturday, October 21, 2023

8am—Registration  
 9am—Guided Meditation—  
 John A. Ottawa, ON  
 10am—Panel-A Spiritual Experience  
 11:30am—Al-Anon Topic TBD  
 1pm—Panel-Many Paths  
 2:30pm—Speaker Jay H. Brockville, ON  
 5:30pm—Doors open for banquet  
 7pm—Closing Remarks, Introduction of  
 the Vice-Chair, Introduction of  
 Intergroup Chair  
 7:15pm—Sobriety Countdown—  
 Kerry O.  
 8pm Closing Meeting— Paula P. Oregon,  
 USA

For more information go to [eoc.ottawaaa.org](http://eoc.ottawaaa.org)

An Alcoholics Anonymous Event with Al-Anon Participation

# 69th Annual Eastern Ontario Conference 2023

**It works—it really does.**

**October 20-21, 2023**

## **Schedule for Side Room**

**Working the 12 Steps in AA & Al-Anon**

**Saturday, October 21, 2023**

10am—11am Steps one, two & three

11:30am—12:30pm Steps four, five & six

1pm—2pm Steps seven, eight & nine

2:30pm—3:30pm Steps ten, eleven &  
twelve

**For more information go to [eoc.ottawaaa.org](http://eoc.ottawaaa.org)**

**An Alcoholics Anonymous Event with Al-Anon Participation**



## Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory

I find commenting on this Step to be daunting. This step is about accountability and it imposes itself sharply upon us every day.

It does not have certain features of other steps. It is not about admitting powerlessness (1), seeking a Higher Power (2-3), writing a document (4), admitting to another person (5), becoming willing (6), making a request (7), making a list (8), or performing guided amends (9).

Step Ten is about accountability - here and now. It's about waking up to our errors today.

But it is not so grim. As it says on page 84 of the Big Book, "we have entered the realm of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness". It is about gratitude that the obsession to drink has

been lifted and that we have been brought into a new life. And of course, this is "not an overnight matter. It should continue for a lifetime."

It is impossible to improve on the text from page 84: "Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we can resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code." In the AA 12&12, the discussion of Step Ten is intense. A key point is that if we are disturbed, the trouble is with us.

Continued on p. 9

## Witnessing my Spiritual Awakening

One of the synonyms for "spiritual awakening" that my sponsor had me note in my Big Book is "psychic change". By practicing a daily step 10, I have had a front row seat to this change in myself.

I do my inventory using an incredibly handy app called "Tenth Step Nightly Inventory" (I think it's worth giving it a download). It asks me 10 yes/no questions with the possibility to add notes to any question. I then send my responses for the day to my sponsor.

The first question is: Was I resentful? When I started using this app, I thought

there would never come a time where I didn't hold a grudge for something or another that happened in my day: the personal slight of a bus being late, my shoes (that I chose to wear) giving me a blister, or no one reading my mind for what I needed. But then the day came where I could honestly answer *no*.

That doesn't mean I enjoyed every single part of that day. I simply didn't perceive any of it as a personal attack and I didn't dwell on any of it. Not to say that I never have resentments by the end of the day, but something that once seemed impossible has become a sometimes reality.

Progress not perfection, right?

I came into AA wanting to do better (by myself, by my loved ones, by society). I stayed because I hoped I could feel better (I do). I'm amazed that the program has helped me to think better. Step 10 reminds of my tangible shift in consciousness, just as my sponsor said would happen if I continued to work the steps.

Catherine B.

Step 10

# Step 10 and Me: Lessons in Progress, Grey Areas, and Spilled Juice

## The Importance of Step 10 for My Program

In my personal journey with AA, I've found Step 10 to be a "progress step" more than just a maintenance one. It's not about upkeep but about ongoing growth, pushing me every day to advance in my program of sobriety. It's the gentle nudge reminding me to pause, acknowledge my missteps, and make amends without delay. This instant accountability doesn't just keep me on track — it moves me forward, fostering both my personal and spiritual development.

## Learning to Live with the Grey

For me, "living in the grey" is all about acknowledging that life isn't a series of either-or scenarios. There's complexity, nuance, and ambiguity at every turn. I found that unsettling in the past, but now I see it as an invitation to deeper understanding, greater empathy, and the opportunity to strengthen my relationship with my Higher Power.

I believe practicing Step 10 on a daily basis aligns with this concept. When I take prompt, on-the-spot inventory, it's never as simple as good or bad, right or wrong. The step encourages me to navigate those grey areas, and to ponder my actions and character defects along with their repercussions. This isn't just maintenance — it's active participation in the messy, beautiful tapestry of life. And it's backed by the support I find in the Fellowship and my Higher Power.

Step 10 also gives me the freedom to respond rather than react impulsively to life's complexities. By taking that moment to pause and assess, I'm less driven by emotional reactions or entrenched habits. This aligns well with the 9th Step Promises of AA — particularly the assurance that "our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change." As promised, I find that I'm not as reactive to the world around me, and I'm better able to bring my best self into every interaction and challenge. This moment-to-moment mindfulness has been transformative, making the grey areas not just tolerable but rich with opportunities for growth and grace.

## The "Spilled Juice Step"

One of the valuable lessons I've learned from regular conversations with my Sponsor is the term "spilled juice step" as another way to describe Step 10. This resonates deeply with me because it captures the essence of what the step is about in my life:

- **Promptly Clean Up:** Like spilled juice, I address my mistakes as soon as I recognize them.
- **Daily Process:** Each day is a fresh start, a new glass ready to be filled.
- **Relationship with Myself:** By taking daily inventory, I keep my inner world as clean as my outer one.
- **Vigilance:** Like you'd watch for spills, I stay alert to my actions and their impacts.
- **Perseverance:** Some spills are stickier than others, but I stay committed to cleaning them up every time.

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## When we were wrong promptly admitted it

Step 10 is my topic today. "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it". The continuation aspect of this Step is in fact from our efforts in Step 4. That's where I took a complete inventory, fearless in nature looking at the actions I took that caused problems, and seeing my part, the big book gives us some guidelines. It tells us that we can grow in understanding and effectiveness and I can look for the root causes, selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. It suggests I need to do this for my lifetime. The inventory I'm taking today is mine, and I can set straight the wrongs and injury as they crop up. Many of us wait till the end of the day to collect our thoughts of the day just past. I think the word promptly suggests that I don't wait till the end of the day. My growth in AA needs to be an all day affair. Awareness of my actions is a great start of this growth. And promptly for me means now. I can take the inventory any time and if I make looking within a part of my ongoing daily routine I can reduce the results of selfish, dishonesty, resentment and fearful behavior.

The inventory is a mini Step 4 on a regular basis. If I gossip about someone and then realize I'm actually hurting their character, I need to make an amends to them asap. I can also ask my HP to remove this defect in my character. If I lie about nearly anything, I need to look at the lie and break it down. Was I lying to avoid an outcome that the truth would set in motion that would adversely affect me. Or was my lie an attempt to cover up an action I did. Lying became for me very easy and occurred often. Today I rigorously

watch my words. And if I do lie, for whatever reason, I make amends as soon as possible. It was amazing how quickly the standard that I now hold myself changed. Our literature wants us to seek our Higher Power's will for us. I'm pretty sure that a higher moral code is within our grasp and Step Ten is the perfect tool to obtain this new level. If I practice looking at my actions, I can change them. And the more I practice the greater the likelihood of change.

The admission portion of the Step may be to the person that was affected by my action and I might want to talk to my sponsor if the action is complex or affects more than one person. The 9th Step finished with the phrase except when to do so would cause harm. I think that still applies. Step 10 can be a working tool to help me stay on the path of rigorous honesty which I know is necessary for ongoing growth in the program. Thanks for reading my thoughts.

Scott F.



The Keep it Simple group meets Saturday mornings 10:00 am.  
 Online Zoom meeting 12 Steps & 12 Traditions Big Book Closed  
 (Closed meetings are for A.A. members only, or for those who have a drinking problem and "have a desire to stop drinking")

Meeting ID 88936570145

# From the AA Archives: Fellowship Group

## Founded October 1961

The Fellowship Group is a Saturday night, 8pm, open speaker meeting. Its location is 429 Parkdale Avenue (Parkdale United Church) at the corner of Parkdale and Gladstone.

The meeting began in October of 1961. The founding members were Alex MacKenzie and Greg Carty. The first meeting was held over the bowling alley on the corner of Wellington and Merton Street and then moved to our present location in 1963.

The group has the old fashion AA feel to it with a lot of long term sobriety and everyone is welcomed at the door or soon after you enter the meeting. Every Saturday night there are snacks provided in way of sandwiches or donuts or cookies.

We always begin the meeting with a moment of silence followed by the serenity prayer; the secretary reads the preamble; How it Works, Steps, Traditions are read; a member's interpretation of one or more of the slogans is given; then the speaker; after the speaker the secretary takes over and passes out the baskets for the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition, announces flyers, asks for announcements

and any out of town guests; announces free literature and books for sale; invites anyone who wants to join to sign our book, mentions the travel directories; then the chips are explained; we close the meeting in a circle by reciting the Responsibility Pledge and the Lord's Prayer.

We set up each night with 50 chairs and a lot of Saturday nights we can fill those chairs. Our group has a few active members and it is these members who keep the group alive.



If you would like to see your Group featured in Our Primary Purpose, please contact [archives@ottawaaa.org](mailto:archives@ottawaaa.org). This will also ensure that your group has a current Group History stored in the Ottawa AA Archives.



## Pearls of Wisdom

This column features simple pearls of wisdom which have been imparted to members over the years.

Failure is not a destination.

The birds sound different when you're sober.

The first thing I put in front of my sobriety is the second thing I'm going to lose.

Take the mess to your Sponsor; take the message to the meeting.

The first step in overcoming mistakes is to admit them.

When your head begins to swell your mind stops growing.

Be as enthusiastic about AA as you were about drinking.

You received without cost, now give without charge.

Trying to pray is praying.

We're responsible for the effort not the outcome.

This is a selfish program.

Keep your sobriety first to make it last.



Please submit your Pearls of Wisdom to: [newsletter@ottawaaa.org](mailto:newsletter@ottawaaa.org).

Thank you for your service!



## Step 10 and Me: Lessons in Progress, Grey Areas, and Spilled Juice (continued)

### Gratitude and Reflection

I am overwhelmed with gratitude for those who have trudged this road of happy destiny with me. The Steps, my Sponsor, and this Fellowship have provided me with the toolkit for living a life beyond my wildest dreams. To those who have openly shared their experience, strength, and hope, you've been the lamp posts illuminating my path. Your presence has been invaluable.



For those who haven't yet reached Step 10, let me assure you — it's worth every effort you put into getting there. The familiar saying holds true: "It works if you work it, so work it, you're worth it." We all deserve the tools this program provides and the serenity that follows. Trust the process, yourself, and most importantly, your Higher Power. Life is complex and messy, but with these tools, we can face it head-on, not just with survival in mind, but with the hope of thriving and growing every day. Thank you for walking this journey with me. I'm glad you're here.

Stephan P.

## Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory (continued)

Further, we must develop self-restraint, especially of "tongue and pen". We have to train ourselves. We have to exercise "special vigilance" and humility. We have to realize that "all people including ourselves are to some extent emotionally ill as well as frequently wrong." There is no point in getting angry. Wow, this is profound!

We don't have to make a big fuss. We simply need to take our spot inventory to a loving God and act accordingly to set things right. If an apology is needed, we make it; if there's a bill to pay, we pay it; if there's a task to perform, we perform it; without the drama!

AA is about action and miracles. It's a miracle for any alcoholic to not drink, but also a miracle that, through Step Ten, we can grow spiritually and walk into the future with less fear and resentment than we had before. Step Ten helps us to "fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."

John C.

### Area 83 September 2023 Announcements (GSR Related Items)

Update sent out on August 30<sup>th</sup> RE: printing delays and backorders at the General Service Office due to supply chain disruptions. A link of that letter is included here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1leKqQ4q0M-bVXT\\_IdGG0mDwDCQCajCPc/view?pli=1](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1leKqQ4q0M-bVXT_IdGG0mDwDCQCajCPc/view?pli=1)

Area 83 Assembly, Kingston, Ontario- October 27-29  
Details for the weekend are available on Area 83's website  
<https://area83aa.org/about-area-83/area-assembly>

The Workshops for GSRs meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 8 pm **October 17<sup>th</sup>**, "**More on the Area Assembly and Service**"

# Step 10

## Daily Living Action Step



Grapevine Books  
available at Intergroup or  
District Grapevine  
representative

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

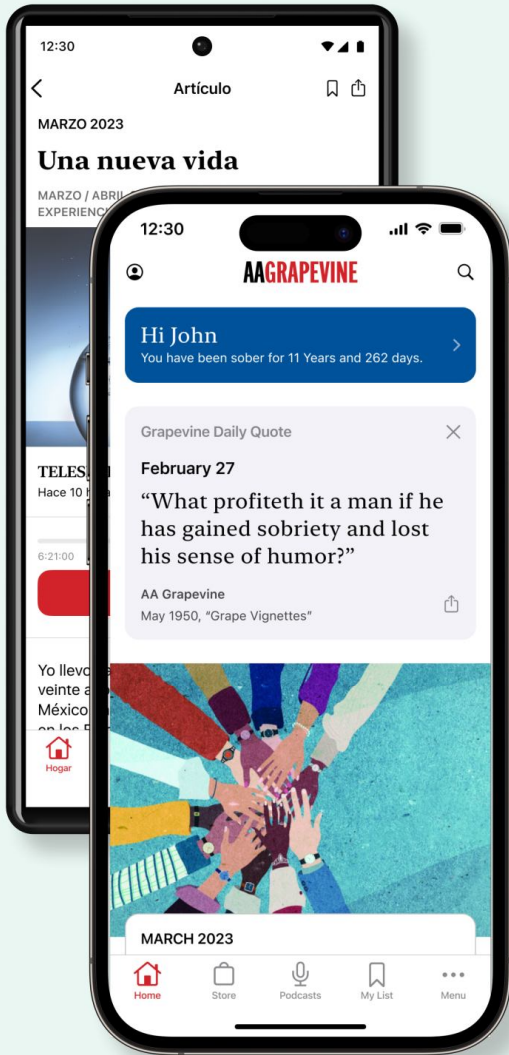
Members describe their personal  
struggles and triumphs with personal  
relationships

### FORMING TRUE PARTNERSHIPS

How AA members use the program  
to improve relationships

### Step 10

**We continue to take personal inventory and when we are wrong promptly admit it. Step 10 steps begins the process of repairing damaged relationships and building a relationship with our higher power through working with others.**



COMING  
SEPTEMBER 2023!

## THE NEW GRAPEVINE & LA VIÑA

# APPS!

- Read or listen to every issue
- Search our vast GV/LV Archives
- Keep track of your sobriety and spiritual practices
- Share your thoughts on articles
- Share AA stories and area events with friends
- Find meetings and connect to aa.org

**EASY  
TO USE!**  
Take GV &  
LV wherever  
you go!

Watch this Space:  
[www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org)



# Cornwall & Area – District 50

## 74<sup>th</sup> Annual AA Conference

### November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023



# “TURNING POINT”

Best Western Parkway Inn  
1515 Vincent Massey Drive, Cornwall, ON  
(613) 932-0451

**Registration fee: \$15 or Registration & Banquet: \$60**

Friday, November 3 <sup>rd</sup> - AA Speakers		Saturday, November 4 <sup>th</sup> - Speakers	
<b>4:30pm</b>	Registration	<b>8:00am</b>	Registration
<b>5:30pm</b>	Welcome	<b>9:00am</b>	Irving M. (Washington, DC)
<b>6:30pm</b>	Kerry O. (Ottawa)	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Akwesasne Panel</b>
<b>8:30pm</b>	Ruth L. (Montreal)	<b>11:30am</b>	LUNCH
		<b>1:00pm</b>	Arlene B. (Toronto)
		<b>2:30pm</b>	<b>Newcomer Panel</b>
		<b>4:00pm</b>	<b>Al-Anon Main Speaker</b>
			Greg M. (Toronto)
		<b>6:00pm</b>	Banquet Dinner
		<b>8:00pm</b>	John B. (Oshawa)

**\*Special room rates available starting at \$160+tax (includes breakfast buffet) \***

**\*\*Dietary meals also available\*\***

**Deadlines for room reservations and dietary requirements: September 20, 2023**

For more information, contact Christina at (613) 330-7118

By email: [cornwall.aa@gmail.com](mailto:cornwall.aa@gmail.com)

Visit our website: [www.cornwallaa.com](http://www.cornwallaa.com).

#### Advanced Tickets Mail-In Registration

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF TICKETS: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING ADDRESS:** Christina Bergeron, #207-222 Sixth Street East, Cornwall, ON K6H 2N7

E-Transfer payments are encouraged to: [cornwall.aa@gmail.com](mailto:cornwall.aa@gmail.com)

Cheques are payable to: “Cornwall AA Conference.”

Pre-paid advanced tickets will be held at the Registration table for pickup.

## 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 – John D.  
Vice-Chair – vacant  
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.

[chair@ottawaaa.org](mailto:chair@ottawaaa.org)  
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[newsletter@ottawaaa.org](mailto:newsletter@ottawaaa.org)

## Ottawa General Service Districts and Committees

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

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

**DISTRICT 58 MEETING**..... First Monday (7:00 pm)  
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue-Room 213-in-person meetings suspended)

**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)  
(Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue-Room 108-in-person meeting suspended)  
([ZOOM Meeting ID 815 5183 4935 Passcode 512429](#))

**PUBLIC INFORMATION/ COOPERATION WITH PROFESSIONALS** Third Thursday (7pm)  
([ZOOM Meeting ID 815 4385 6025 Passcode PICPC](#))

**OTTAWA ARCHIVES**..... Third Wednesday (6:30pm)  
Bronson Centre, 211 Bronson Avenue-Room 108 in-person meeting

**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](mailto:info@ottawaaa.org).

**Do you have a question for the Intergroup board?** Please email us with your question and you can also request an invitation to meet with us at our monthly 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 editor 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. Seeking neither 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 editor 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.