

Our Primary Purpose

www.ottawaaa.org

Ottawa Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous 

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

Intergroup's
12-Step
Coordinator
position is
still vacant.

For more
information
contact:
ottawaaa.org



*Love and
Tolerance is
our code*

Step 2
Came to believe...





Recovery Through Gratitude

When I first came into the zoom world of Alcoholics Anonymous, due to getting sober during Covid, gratitude lists became a popular way to connect with others. Something many people still do and share with me and many others.

A year or two before this practice came into my heart, and part of my spiritual practice, I had a therapist who suggested I try and write 3 things I was grateful for every day. This was a gift that my Higher Power provided during the hardest and most chaotic time of my life. Then a divorce that threw my alcoholism into a spiral that only gratitude was able to ease and keep me sane. I started with an app that would remind me at 7am to be grateful and it has become a wonderful daily spiritual practice.

Now 3 years into the program I receive approximately 10 lists a day from people all over the world to show me and teach me how this tool can keep this alcoholic safe and sound.

I heard this on a meeting: “a man carrying his own lantern is not afraid of the dark”. And gratitude is a piece of that lantern that keeps me away from a drink. I no longer fear the uncertainty of life because I keep it in the

day, constantly reminding myself how to pause and be grateful for what's been provided for me through the promises of Alcoholics Anonymous.

My Higher Power exists in those moments of pause and gratitude that allows me to be appreciative for what I have because of the decision I made 3 and a bit years ago to better my life.

Like meditation, this is a practice I try to keep simple. Sometimes its 3 items, sometimes it's more. Expanding and allowing myself to be vulnerable when being grateful has changed the way I reflect on my new life. I get down on my knees at night and I express my gratitude to my Higher Power for what was provided for me during the day and I make sure I remember what it is like to live in gratitude.

Sending gratitude lists is not always an easy practice for me or remembering to be grateful in moments of chaos. But it is a practice I must maintain to grow stronger in my spiritual condition. I am grateful for those little reminders throughout the day to be grateful for what I have in sobriety “a grateful heart will never drink” -don't know who said it (lol) but a wonderful reminder of what it is that I have that allows me to stay present and away from picking up that first drink.

Bonnie D.

TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE 2024

Hello friends,
My name is Steve and I'm the new Telephone Answering Service Coordinator. After a quick review, we are filling about 50 percent of available shifts. I am actively seeking new groups to take on this rewarding service commitment on a monthly rotation. I would like to invite any experienced member to pick up an open shift as desired. I can be contacted at: tas@ottawaaa.org. Then I will add you to the calendar.



A few housekeeping notes:

- In office, TAS is still available for Sponsor/Sponsee, review the calendar to find an opening and schedule a time. There is an NDA form for security reasons. The access code will be provided.
- The call log should be used for each call as described on the service volunteers page. However, when using a cell phone the appearance of this page may not be complete. The submit button might be missing.
- Please delete any voicemail in the Unite system after it's been followed up on.
- Please make **NO** changes to the information on the “my details” page. Go directly to the dashboard tab and begin.
- The Sobriety requirement is 1 year. Take advantage of the online tutorial on the Unite telephone answering service. Coaching throughout the process can be done by any TAS volunteer, myself or an experienced member or Sponsor.

Thank you in advance for your service,
Steve R.

GOAL: SANITY

“Came to believe!” I gave lip service to my belief when I felt like it or when I thought it would look good. I didn’t really trust God. I didn’t believe He cared for me. I kept trying to change things I couldn’t change. Gradually, in disgust, I began to turn it all over, saying: “You’re so omnipotent, you take care of it.” He did. I began to receive answers to my deepest problems, sometimes on the most unusual times: driving to work, eating lunch, or when I was sound asleep. I realized that I hadn’t thought of those solutions – a Power greater than myself had given them to me. I came to believe.

Finding Sanity

In Step One, I had to 1- admit that I was powerless over alcohol and 2- admit that my life had become unmanageable. In Step Two, I had to 1- come to believe in a power greater than myself and 2- come to believe that I could be restored to sanity.

Like many alcoholics I've spoken to over the years, I didn't remember what it was like to not be insane.

When I was 8, my parents made my schoolboard give me a mental assessment in the hopes that I would be deemed gifted and given challenges in the classroom. As a child, I scored a 98 in anxiety: double asterisk, clinically significant (also: above average in math and language skills, below average in spacial perception and visualization).

Once in recovery, my first goal for Step 2 was to have the most obvious insanity removed: the urge to drink. What could help me with that? I knew I

couldn't do it alone. I'd tried. Eventually, I didn't spend nights talking myself out of the first drink anymore, but I still didn't feel sane. I was still plagued by fears every day. That childhood anxiety hadn't left me.

Now, the sanity that I've gained by working the Steps, the promise that I give my Sponsees their Higher Power could do for them, is that *life can feel ok*.

I don't think I've been **restored** to sanity. I believe I've gained it for the first time. I feel more comfortable with myself, with others and with life than I ever have. That is a gift of AA that is worth working for, in my humble (and hopefully sane) opinion!

Catherine B.



Cooperation, not Affiliation, with AA

What is required to volunteer to conduct AA meetings at Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre, OWMC (detox)?

- 1) A winning smile
- 2) A positive attitude
- 3) A working knowledge of the Twelve Steps with a Sponsor
- 4) Ability to provide personal contact information
- 5) Sobriety requirement: to Chair 2 years and to Co-Chair 1 year

To sign up email: owmc@ottawaaa.org or call (613) 237-6000 and leave a message. You will receive the guidelines and a copy of the script to use for practice. It's that easy! Available timeslots: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00 pm and Saturdays at 10:30am.

"You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail". BB pg.89

DO NOT WAIT by Lilly W.

Do not wait for me to inspire you
For I am broken too
Let us listen instead to our heartbeat
In unison we will meet

Do not wait for me to love you
To yourself be still and presence
For how would you know the essence
Of your own heart song that longs for
you

Do not wait for me to approve of you
For there is nothing to gain
When you feel your own essence
your heart love will lessen your pain

Do not wait for glory
For it may never come
What is more important
Is your love for everyone

Do not wait to be happy
For it is in the now
Your struggles, your suffering
Are but moments in time
That will inspire you somehow

Do not wait to be unbroken
For that is the final act
accept you own your defects
your light will love you back



From AA Archives: Freedom Group (Updated)

The Freedom Group is part of Ottawa West District 62 and it meets at Kitchissippi United Church on Island Park Drive behind the Royal Ottawa Hospital every Tuesday evening at 8:00pm. The meeting format is open speaker.

The Freedom Group's roots originated as the "**Royal Ottawa Hospital Group**" in 1973 when it was originally conceived and funded by The Royal Ottawa Hospital. The group became "self-supporting" on February 10, 1977 when it registered with the General Service Office as an AA Group. The name was changed to "**The Royal Ottawa Group**" and the format altered to an open speaker meeting. The founding members were Mike M. and Dave B. and the first GSR was Joanne M. The name was changed again in 1982 to "**The Freedom Group**". The name Freedom Group was suggested by Mike P. also known as "Cowboy Mike" and it was drawn from a hat in which all suggested names were included.

Meetings were held on Tuesdays at 8:00 pm in The Patients Centre at The Royal Ottawa Hospital from 1973 to 1983. In September 1983 the meeting location was changed to Kitchissippi (formerly Kingsway) United Church where it remains today.

The Royal Ottawa Group's first Information form to the GSO in

1977 indicated they had 15 members. By the mid 1980's attendance grew into one of Ottawa's largest mixed meetings running consistently with 100 - 150 people in attendance. Group Membership was approximately 20 to 30 active members at that time.

In the late 1990's, smoking was banned during the meetings and attendance dropped dramatically to 30 - 40 people and sometimes less. Attendance at Business Meetings also dropped to 4-5 members and there was concern the meeting might fold. However attendance began to grow again to where it is today, normally around 40-50 people and can exceed to more than that for celebrations. It is very rare that we don't have at least two birthday celebrations every month. Freedom's Business Meetings are well supported with a minimum of 9 to 14 active members in attendance on a monthly basis.

Membership mainly came from the Meadow Creek Treatment Centre located in the Royal Ottawa Hospital during the 1980's until the Fall of 2016 when the Centre closed. As part of their drug and alcohol rehab programs, clients were required to attend Freedom Group Meetings. As such, many make Freedom their home group once they have completed rehab.

In March of 2020 The Freedom Group ceased in-person meetings as The Church was shuttered. Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 health officials mandated that indoor gatherings were not permitted. Freedom Group continued on-line by hosting meetings with the same open speaker format on the ZOOM platform.

(Continued on page 8)



>>>ANNOUNCEMENTS<<<

Lunch with Bill Zoom

Zoom meetings Monday to Friday, including holidays. Time: 12pm (noon)
Open Discussion Meeting ID: 438760386 no password required.

Lunch with Bill In-Person

3 In-person meetings per week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) Time:12noon
Open discussion 470 Roosevelt Westboro Wheelchair access

Group email:lunchwithbill@outlook.com

Group website: <https://lunchwithbill.wordpress.com>

Sybil B. 43 years January 11

Susan B. 14 years on January 30

Michael M. 32 years on February 12

Barry J. 38 years on February 14

Peggy R. 20 years February 26

Abstinence Anniversaries are published here!

Please send them to: newsletter@ottawaaa.org

OWMC Ottawa Withdrawal
Management Centre (detox)
has a new email address:
owmc@ottawaaa.org

If you would like to contribute a recovery related story to Our Primary Purpose, email to: newsletter@ottawaaa.org by the 15th of the month.

Thank you, Our Primary Purpose Editor

To have an announcement posted here contact: newsletter@ottawaaa.org

From AA Archives: Freedom Group (continued)

The on-line meeting was well received and averaged 30-45 attendees weekly. The online meetings lasted from March 2020 until the end of September 2021 then in October 2021 the meeting was allowed to re-open with restrictions. Group conscious opted for a “hybrid” meeting format on a trial basis.

The hybrid meeting format proved effective with an average attendance of 40-45 at the in-person joined by 15-25 on-line. However, for various reasons, not all members were in favor of the “hybrid” format and preferred the Group return to the in-person meeting only. Discussions took place over several months at the Business Meetings and Group Conscious voted to continue with the “hybrid meeting format”. This issue was finally put to rest at the June 2022 Business Meeting when members voted unanimously to buy a tablet and microphone for the Group to facilitate the hybrid meeting.

A motion was presented at the Business Meeting in September 2023 to remove the Lord’s Prayer in closing the Meeting. After a healthy discussion, group conscious decided to open and close the meeting with Serenity Prayer.

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



Area 83’s Service Information Day, **February 10, 2024**. Full day of workshops on General Service topics. Online event. Agenda available at: https://area83aa.org/docs/events/2024/Spring_2024_SID_Agenda.pdf

Eastern Canada Delegates’ Orientation (ECDO) **March 17, 2024** On-line Event. Opportunity for members to give input for the Delegate to bring to General Service Conference. All A.A. members welcome to attend!

Area Spring Assembly **April 5-7, 2024**. Hybrid event taking place at St. Lawrence College in Kingston, Ontario. Pre-conference Agenda sharing workshops on Saturday.

2024 Eastern Canada Regional Forum **August 23-25, 2024** Free of charge! This event will be hosted in your city of Ottawa at the Delta Hotels by Marriott. In-person event.



28th Annual Seaway Valley North - District 48 Round Up - A New Beginning

Saturday February 3rd, 2024

Theme: Happy, Joyous, and Free

Event Details:

- Registration at 8:00am
- Breakfast, Lunch & Potluck Dinner
- A.A. & Al-Anon Panels
- Keynote Speaker
- 7th Tradition

Location: Matilda Community Hall

- 4421 Brinston Road (County Road 16)
Dixon's Corners, Ontario
30 Minutes South-East of Kemptville,
20 Minutes North-East of the 401/416 Split

For more information contact:

- Sara M. - dcmdistrict48@gmail.com
- Margaret S. - jay.salmon@xplornet.ca
- www.seawayvalleynorthdistrict48aa.org



PRESCOTT-SOUTH GRENVILLE AA

***Celebrating 65 years of carrying
the message***



Monday February 19, 2024

8:00 PM

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

425 Centre St., Prescott, ON

All are welcome

Light refreshments, cake and coffee will be served



Alcoholics Anonymous

ST. PATRICK'S DAY ROUND-UP

Saturday, March 16, 2024

RENFREW-PONTIAC DISTRICT 70

FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE

**The Renfrew Armouries
115 Veterans Memorial Boulevard
Renfrew, ON**



Registration opens @ 10:30 AM

**7th Tradition
Light Lunch Provided**



First Speaker @ 11:30 AM/Closing Speaker @ 4:00 PM

AA and Al-Anon Panels All Afternoon

POT LUCK DINNER @ 5:00 PM

FREE PARKING

Wheelchair Accessible

Pre-Register
to Win!
Free Hotel Room!
+ \$100 The Keg
Gift Card!*

ORC
2024

ONTARIO REGIONAL
CONFERENCE of
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
with AL-ANON/ALATEEN

MARCH 15 - 17 2024
A NEW FREEDOM

SHERATON CENTRE TORONTO HOTEL

John A, Heartland, TX
Ruth L, Montreal, QC
Katie P, Austin, TX
Steve L, Nashville, TN

Family Panel:

Amanda B & Angie B

Al-Anon Main Speaker:
Catherine K, Dallas, TX

Registration: \$55 | Banquet: \$105 | Special Hotel Rate: \$215/night

To register please visit: www.aaorc.ca

*Each ticket purchased by Feb 1, 2024 will be entered into a random draw, with one winner selected on Feb 9, 2024.
The winner will receive a \$100 The Keg Gift Card and be given a free hotel room for Mar 15 and 16.



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

Newsletter Editor
newsletter@ottawaaa.org
 Article submission deadline is
 the 15th 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 Service – Steve R.
 Literature – Walter H.
 12-Step Coordinator– vacant
 Spring Conference – vacant
 Eastern Ontario Conference– Kevin O.
 Newsletter – Dawn-Marie M.

chair@ottawaaa.org
vice@ottawaaa.org
secretary@ottawaaa.org
treasurer@ottawaaa.org
webmaster@ottawaaa.org
tas@ottawaaa.org
literature@ottawaaa.org
12step@ottawaaa.org
spring@ottawaaa.org
eoc@ottawaaa.org
newsletter@ottawaaa.org

Ottawa General Service Districts and Committees

District 54 – Ottawa East – 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](#))

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.

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.

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 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.