

Our Primary Purpose

Ottawa Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous

THE PRIDE EDITION

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

- Writings
- Service Opportunities
- Group History
- A.A. Anniversaries
- Announcements
- Upcoming events

LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.

June is widely seen as LGBTQ Pride month in a commemoration of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. This edition of Our Primary Purpose carries stories written by our members that are related to being LGBTQ in A.A. From the A.A. General Service Conference Approved Pamphlet "[LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.](#):"

“If you think you may have a problem with alcohol, we in Alcoholics Anonymous invite you to join us. In A.A. you will find a community of kindred folks from every walk of life and “of every stripe.” For those of us who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ), A.A. extends a helping hand, an open heart, and a life-saving and life-affirming program of recovery. From the time A.A. was founded, with one alcoholic helping another in Akron, Ohio, on June 10, 1935, the hope of the Fellowship has always been to reach every alcoholic who needs and wants help.”



The above graphic is used with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

Being Gay in A.A.

By Catherine L.

I got sober in Ottawa in 1991 and I came out as a gay woman to myself, to my family, and to my friends in 1992. I felt a great deal of relief from both of these revelations in my life. I finally had an alternative to my own plan for handling life which was to ‘drown all my sorrows’ in alcohol whenever possible, which happened to be on a daily basis. And, I finally understood why I had never been ‘boy crazy’ in high school and why I had never had sex sober. I was sure

that other people would be as happy as I was to have these mysteries of life finally solved. But, this was five years prior to Ellen’s coming out episode on TV and people were not as open minded about sexuality in those days. My A.A. sponsor told me that many people questioned their sexuality once they got sober and that the important thing was ‘not to act on it’. My addiction counselor told me that I was ‘just going through a phase’. I tried going to a women’s group and identifying

there as both an alcoholic and a lesbian and I was told that these meetings were just about alcoholism. One of the women in that meeting stated that she had been sexually abused by lesbians in the past and that she now felt unsafe knowing that I was in the room. I was struggling with the shame of both my alcoholism and my sexuality. I sought out the LGBT A.A. meetings in Ottawa and there I found I could be accepted for both of these 'addictions'. There were three local LGBT A.A. meetings a week in Ottawa at that time. Live and Let Live on Sunday evenings, which became my home group, The Third Tradition on Wednesday nights and a Friday night Step meeting which I forget the name of. Every week I went to two LGBT meetings as well as several regular A.A. meetings in the neighborhood where I lived. I remained closeted in my regular A.A. home group for several years. I had two sponsors, a straight woman in my regular A.A. home group and a gay woman in my LGBT home group.

There were very few women in the LGBT meetings back then and I was having trouble making friends with other gay women. My sponsor at Live and Let Live tried to date me and then I knew I needed to widen my circle. Together with my partner, Karen, we organized a Lesbian A.A. group at Glebe St. James United Church in 1995. It turned out to be a great way to meet other sober lesbians. The business meetings were hilarious and at one point a motion was put on the floor to name ourselves The Eager Beavers. Fortunately cooler heads prevailed and we ended up calling ourselves The Tuesday Night Lesbian A.A. Group. I contacted Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre about advertising our group and was told that they were running a Lesbian discussion group on the same night as our A.A. meeting. I was also told that they would discourage women from attending our group, in any case, because they believed that A.A. was misogynistic and disempowering to women. Our group persisted, however, and we decided to move our meetings to Wednesday nights. I was tasked with calling the Intergroup once to make the change on the meeting list. The man who answered the phone suggested that I

change the name of the group if I wanted more people to attend. I took immediate offense and said that I wanted the name to remain the same so that people would know that the group was for lesbians. He laughed and said "Yes. But you might want to change the name to The Wednesday Night Lesbian A.A. Meeting".

At that time I was primed to see homophobia everywhere. The lesbian meeting closed after two years due to a lack of newcomers but the women I met there remain lifelong friends. I am very grateful for that experience.

Other highlights of my life in A.A. include: marching in the Ottawa Pride Parades under the A.A. banner with all the people that I saw at meetings (by that time I was completely out both as an alcoholic and a lesbian in my professional and private life), and attending Gay and Lesbian A.A. Conferences in Montreal with friends I had made in the rooms in Ottawa.

In 2007 I moved away from Ottawa, with my wife, to be closer to her young grandchildren. I moved back to Ottawa nine years later when my marriage ended. Reentering Ottawa A.A. in 2016 was a new experience for me. Women's groups were full of queer women of all stripes who were not afraid to fly their freak flags. Thank God for that. I felt at home there immediately. I also went back to my old home group Live and Let Live a few times and was able to reconnect with some of my old friends there including an old sponsor, Marc P. (Yes. I finally figured out back in the 90's that as a gay woman you needed to find a gay man to sponsor you in order to avoid any 13-stepping lol). Nowadays Ottawa still has two weekly LGBT A.A. meetings. Live and Let Live is still a discussion group and still meets on Sunday nights but it is now online. And there is a new LGBT meeting called Lavender Pride that meets online on Wednesday nights. See the meeting list for the links to these meetings. <https://ottawaaa.org/meetings/>

Group History

Presented by Ottawa A.A. Archives

Trinity Group

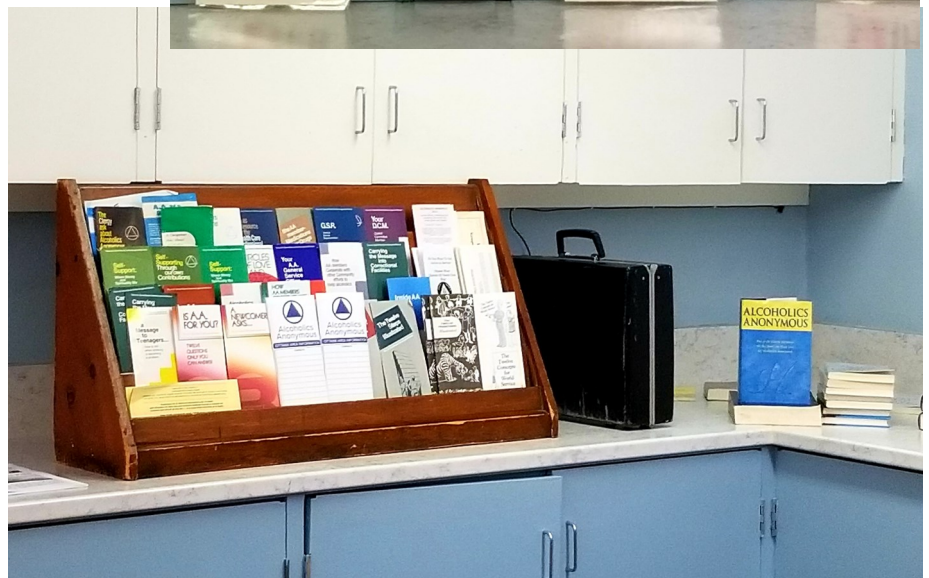
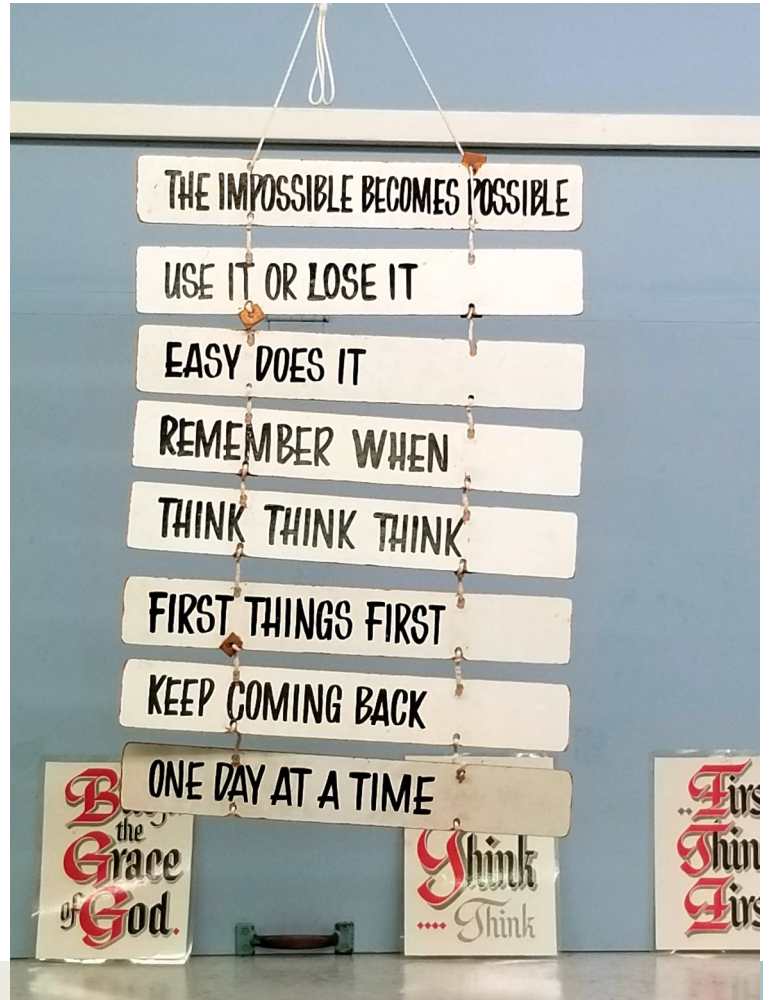
Founded: 1977

The Group was started on June 1, 1977 with fourteen members who met at the Trinity United Church on Wednesday's at 8:00 pm. Wes S and Dennis B were listed with the General Service Office (GSO) as the group contacts.

On January 21, 1988, the GSO had Barney C and Clarke C as the group contacts. The group now had grown to 60 members.

Over the years the meeting time changed to 8:30 pm. As of 2010, the contact person for the group is Michael F, with 15 members.

The group has always met at the Trinity United Church on Wednesday evenings.



A.A. Anniversaries

Ottawa Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous

JUNE 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 Morning Glory: Bill S. 32 years
2	3	4	5	6	7	
9 Vanier Early Birds: Glenn W. 14 years	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 Morning Glory: Shawn M. 1 year	20	21 Vanier Early Birds: Chris M. 7 years	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

NEW MEETING: THE NEXT RIGHT THING

Saturdays – 7pm
 Closed discussion
 St. Paul's Presbyterian Church – Fireside Room
 971 Woodroffe Ave, Ottawa, ON K2A 3G9
 Starts June 8th
 Also listed in the meeting directory

Pride in the Rooms

By David S.

Thank goodness for the Traditions, and in my instance, especially Traditions One, Three and FourMy name is David and I am an alcoholic, and at the beginning of May marked 8766 days (24 years) of continuous sobriety.

In the Big Book of A.A., in A Vision For You - there are two references that come to mind when I was asked to share for this month's edition. Page 154; 'He could see the gay crowd inside' and page 160; 'He succumbed to that gay crowd inside, who laughed at their own misfortunes and understood his.' Now, I do understand that when this was written and still today, the intent and meaning of the use of the word gay was in the traditional sense of our language meaning 'carefree', 'cheerful', or 'bright and showy'. However, for me, it meant a whole lot more as I sought out a solution to my dis-ease.

The A.A. meetings worldwide that have emerged for gays in recovery like me - have saved so many lives, they certainly saved mine and they along with mainstream meetings gave me so much more than I could have ever imagined. While I completely accept my alcoholism and addiction, being gay, meant dealing with so many other co-factors that complicated my illness and made my chances of recovery and a decent life, very fragile - the rooms both mainstream and gay have been my lifeline and my healing. In many ways, the gay groups, fiercely defend our singleness of purpose of one alcoholic helping another as this disease affects our communities many times over with very high death rates unfortunately, so it stands that one gay alcoholic helping another gay alcoholic would be vital for many. I needed to see and identify with other gay men in recovery as part of this healing and a chance at a better life. I have also had the gift of having straight men among my sponsors, and while they guided me through the steps and we could identify on

so many levels, there were always those aspects of my life that were different that they could not identify with..

I came in with so much shame, guilt, internalized to the depths of my soul, at a time when AIDS was devastating our communities, which also complicated my health with unimaginable grief and loss and once again fear. While I immediately identified at my first A.A. meeting, there was something much deeper when I went to my first gay A.A. meeting - I had found my recovery tribe and thus a path of recovery and healing.

I often in my sharing of my story, express that my journey has not only helped me manage my alcoholism on daily basis but has also been a healing journey of my queerness. And a huge part of that has been access to gay meetings and other gays in recovery showing me the way forward. I have been so blessed and grateful to have been able to deal with the shame, guilt, fear of the past, been taught through daily practice how to live life one day at a time without thinking about the use of alcohol or drugs and as each daily reprieve passes, so much more is revealed. And most of all, you have taught me how to practice the principles of the steps in all my affairs.

So today I'm much more comfortable in myself and with life. My circumstances have steadily improved as my physical, spiritual and emotional life grows and expands. My heart is full of gratitude as I look at how much I and how my life has changed and I know there is much more to discover. I owe much of this to all of you, my Higher Power, the rooms - especially the gay rooms and I ask for help each day for guidance and how I can give back that which has been so freely given.

Thank you gay A.A., thank you A.A., thank you Traditions and Happy Pride to all.

Service Opportunities

Ottawa Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous

Service Opportunity

Contact Info

Notes:

Telephone Answering Service

tas@ottawaaa.org

Vacant shifts available—one time or monthly. See information in this edition of Our Primary Purpose.

Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre (OWMC),

owmc@ottawaaa.org

Carry the message. See information in this edition of Our Primary Purpose

Intergroup Alternate Webmaster

webmaster@ottawaaa.org

See information in this edition of Our Primary Purpose.

Intergroup Treasurer (upcoming vacancy)

treasurer@ottawaaa.org

Intergroup 12-Step Coordinator

www.ottawaaa.org



Overcoming Shame and Developing Pride in A.A.

By DWW

I never realized how detrimental shame was in my life. It has taken much therapy, self-reflection and working through the Steps for me to come to some measure of self-awareness. When I was a younger person, I felt shame about my ethnicity; about the poverty of my family; about my parents' alcoholism and the chaos that was so much a part of my young life. Most of all, I felt great shame about being gay.

I was taught very early in life that queers were mentally sick. They were unnatural and twisted. Homosexuals were to be shunned because they were predators, ready to lure and pounce. Good people said that gay people were evil and intrinsically disordered. As a fearful gay youth, that was a lot for me to take in. Despite the homophobia that still abounds in the world, I know today that I am none of those things. People who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community are as good and natural as anyone else. They are as beautiful and precious as all other people in this world.

After a devastating history of drinking, I gratefully found A.A. I was able to discover a way to rebuild my life. Attending A.A. meetings is an essential component of my recovery and has given me a path to discover a richer, sober life.

Nevertheless, there are aspects and experiences of myself that I am not comfortable sharing with anyone at any meeting. This is why I have found LGBTQ+ A.A. meetings especially important in my healing. I have found great comfort in safely sharing in meetings with other gay members about our similar experiences and healing from the psychological wounds and sometimes physical

harms that come from living in a homophobic society.

I learn so much from attending A.A. meetings, but I am grateful that I can find a particular support and solace in LGBTQ+ A.A. meetings. As I celebrate Pride during the month of June, I am also celebrating the safe spaces that LGBTQ+ A.A. meetings provide. Through them, I grow in acceptance of who I am and find the courage to overcome the shame that has bound me. One day at a time. One meeting at a time.



From the Other Side—Al-Anon Members Encouraged to Attend A.A. Open Speaker Meetings

By Shelley M

As Al-Anon members, we are often encouraged to attend A.A. Open Speaker Meetings. Al-Anon members could learn a lot from going to these meetings.

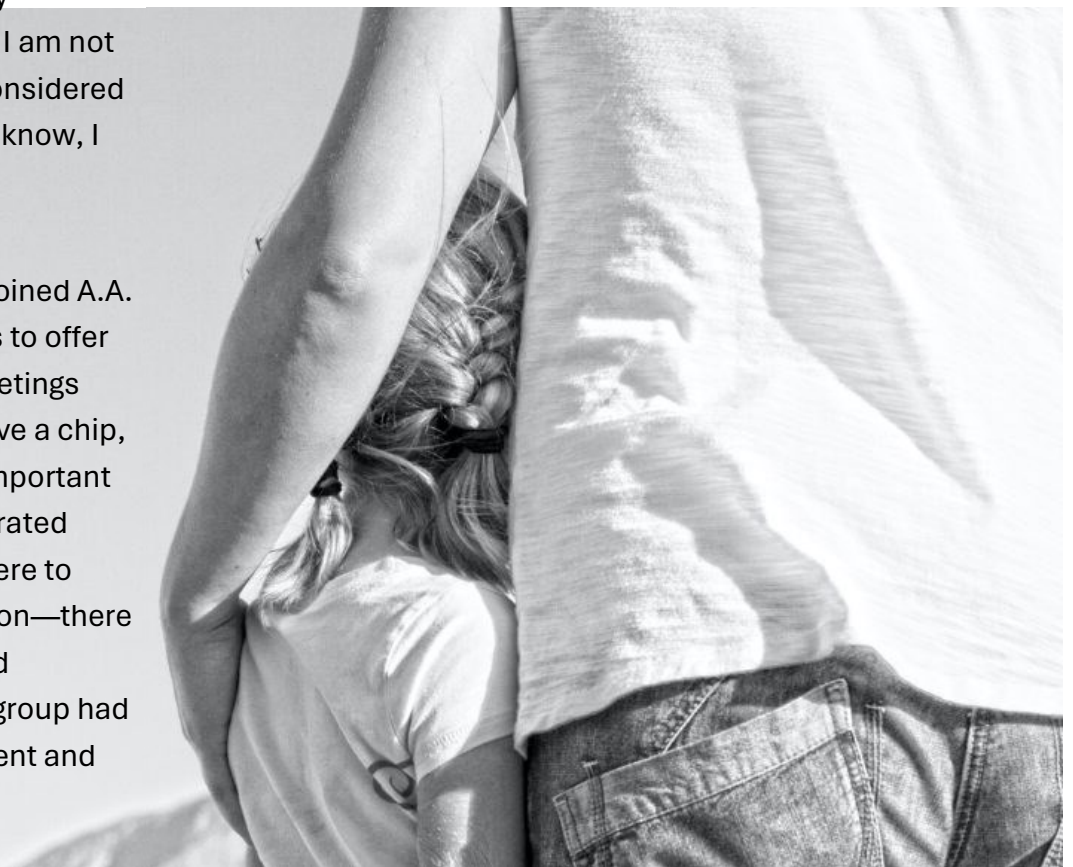
Before coming to Al-Anon, I was no stranger to A.A. *My beloved uncle was gay, and was also an A.A. Member. He invited family members to attend his annual celebrations. I always thought, ‘these folks sound so happy.’ From the warm welcome at the door, a delicious cup of coffee and plenty of hugs and enthusiastic greetings always made me feel at home.* It was very evident that my uncle found fellowship in these rooms. I have good friends who are in A.A., and I’ve attended many celebrations of sobriety. Although I am not a friend of Bill W., I have always considered myself a close relative. Little did I know, I would be attending even more A.A. meetings.

When someone very close to me joined A.A. I thought that one of the best ways to offer support was to attend the A.A. Meetings when it was time for them to receive a chip, marking milestones on that first important year of sobriety. When they celebrated their first year of sobriety, I was there to witness a truly heart-felt celebration—there was an out-pouring of love, joy and friendship. My loved one’s home group had freely given support, encouragement and respect.

I loved the structure of A.A. Meetings—they follow a predictable path that offers much comfort in an otherwise chaotic world.

“The messages shared by the speakers allow non-alcoholics a glimpse of what it’s like to have walked this path—stories are poignant, informative, sometimes humorous, and always triumphant. I’ve learned so much from others candidly sharing something so deeply personal and profound. “

Through Al-Anon, I’ve met many people who are members of both Al-Anon and A.A. A friend of mine once told me that alcoholism is a family disease—



shake the tree and the bottles fall out. It stands to reason then that alcoholics come from a family where drinking runs rampant.

“Part of Al-Anon Tradition Six states: Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous.” Attending open A.A. Speaker meetings helps us to strengthen our relationship with A.A. It is also important to remember, from Tradition Eleven that we ‘need guard with special care the anonymity of all A.A. Members.’ “

Along with attending A.A. Open Speaker meetings, I’ve been fortunate to have been able to attend numerous events, such as the annual Alkathon, East -Athon and Working on Welllness days. Although I can never fully understand what it is like to be an alcoholic, all of these have deepened my understanding.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of the alcoholics who have welcomed me in and made me feel at home. As a close relative of Bill W., this is truly appreciated.

Pride.

By Dick G.

One September, Monday night, in 2013, I showed up at St. Stephen’s Presbyterian Church not knowing what I would find. It was only my second A.A. meeting, and I was scared out of my wits. The meeting was Step By Step. As I walked down the stairs to the first of many church basements, I could hear people talking, laughing, lots of people. Jamie M. greeted me with a big warm handshake, introduced himself, and told me I was in the right place. He obviously knew something I didn’t. Jamie



took me under his wing that night and encouraged me to pick up a white chip. In fact, Jamie helped me stay grounded and sober those first few weeks and

months. On the surface, Jamie and I couldn’t have had different different lives; but here we were, two kindred spirits doing our best to stay sober, one day at a time.

At Step By Step, I knew I was home. It was there I first said the words, “My name is Dick and I’m an alcoholic.” A simple statement of fact; no shame, no fear, no judgement. A simple fact. Another simple fact, I’m gay. Jamie didn’t care, didn’t bat an eye. Nor did anyone else.

Those first few months I went to a lot of meetings; trying them on; finding ones that worked for me. I discovered A.A. was full of people from every walk of life, every race, creed, sexual orientation, identity and expression. One thing that all the meetings I went to shared was the simple, single purpose of alcoholics helping each other stay sober.

In 2018 I went to a sober, gay men’s conference in New York City and discovered a bigger world of recovery. Men came from all over the world, all sharing their journeys in recovery. Gay & Sober’s mission is simple – to provide a safe, fun, and enriching experience to the sober LGBTQ community. What a better time and place to do that

in New York City during Pride: workshops, speaker meetings, social events, the Pride Parade, a sober river cruise. I volunteered for service at every event I thought I might find a reason not to go to. Within a couple of years, I was Program Chair. One of many gifts recovery has given me: I had gone from a frightened man walking down the stairs to a church basement, to organizing an international conference and speaking in front of 500+ people from around the world.

It was at that first Gay Sober Men's Conferences (GSM) I learned about the vibrant world of gay A.A. in the US. Clubhouses dedicated to LGBT recovery meetings, gay roundups all over the country.

I was jealous. Why didn't we have things like this in Canada for the queer community? I listened carefully to the stories my US fellows told me: Stories of living in small towns; stories of fear; stories of exclusion. Not necessarily in A.A.; in their daily lives. I was reminded not everyone lives in the reasonably affluent, educated, and tolerant bubble of Ottawa. Those clubhouses and roundups are a

safe space for queer folks to be themselves.

Those stories gave me reason to pause; to reflect on the many privileges I have and often take for granted. Even in Ottawa, not everyone is safe or feels safe. When I returned to Ottawa, I was determined to do something to help other queer folk in town. But what could I do? With the privilege of being a cis, white, male I could create safe spaces wherever I went. I could be as out as possible. I also returned to the Sunday night Live and Let Live LGBT meeting of A.A.; in my comfort, I had drifted away from it. I now realized how important it is to have queer meetings. With another member, I started a second queer meeting, Lavender Pride, held online on Wednesday evenings.

So what have I learned? A.A. is full of people who practice "tolerance, patience, and goodwill." Due to no fault of A.A., safe queer spaces are important for the many queer folk who have experienced intolerance and hatred. My responsibility is to nurture those safe spaces for the next suffering alcoholic.

Replacing Alcoholic Shame with Sober Pride.

By Danl

I was a wreck, suicidal really, but my shrink had finally talked me into trying at least one A.A. meeting. I didn't have high hopes for it.

At 29, my 5-6 year relationship had just crashed and burned. It was 1989 and my best friend was one of a dozen people I knew dying of AIDS. If I end up coming out during the sharing, the last thing I need is some judgemental know-it-all giving me a weird look. It was bad enough I knew the 'G—' word would be on

the wall when TV news was full of people saying God hates gays and HIV was the punishment. I had already survived one queer-bashing by a gang of strangers a few years back, and plenty of gay-baiting comments over the years. I am not sticking around for anything that even hints at that.

A young guy standing at the community centre's reception desk looks up, smiles, and says "Hi, can I help you?"

“Yeah, I heard there were A.A. meetings here tonight.” He starts to point down the hall and I say “And one of them’s gay.” He turns away faster than I would have thought possible and just says “Upstairs.” A pretty common reaction at the time.

Up I go, into the room where things have already started. One after another, 10 guys and one woman shared how the steps or their sponsor or some big book are helping them deal with a problem with their boss, or school, the rent or their family – all without alcohol. I don’t remember if I even noticed the first time one of the guys referred to his boyfriend or called his ex ‘he’. But I sure remember the first time one of them mentioned his HIV diagnosis.

I had just spent half an hour strongly identifying with their fear and anger and loneliness. But now, they were identifying the burning issues in my life that I never thought it was safe to talk about in front of strangers. Instead of worrying about someone else’s reaction to my being gay, it’s actually helping me identify even more strongly with the members at my very first meeting. Thank you! See you again next week!!

“Gradually I came out of my shell and was able to share too, to accept a sponsor, to read the Big Book, and to get to 3 ‘gay’ meetings a week.”

I say ‘gay’ because each of them was open to anyone with a desire to stop drinking but the Meeting List said they were ‘hosted by gay and lesbian members.’ So, I can only remember one time someone else showed up and kept mentioning he wasn’t gay but he really needed a meeting. He appreciated everyone making him feel like it was just another A.A. meeting. Yeah, dude, it is just another A.A. meeting – where some people who felt unsafe elsewhere can be themselves openly and honestly. In fact, gay meetings are where I first replaced 29 years of shame with pride in just being me one day at a time.

A couple of months later a colleague and I surprised

each other by talking about not drinking anymore. She mentioned there were A.A. meetings twice a week where we worked, which had never occurred to me. By then I was comfortable enough being at an A.A. meeting that I could just be myself when sharing or speaking so my list of possible meetings grew from 3 to 5. And eventually to over 200 meetings I’d be comfortable walking into anywhere across the city. Over the years, which meetings I attend regularly has ebbed and flowed. For ages, I haven’t honestly been to a meeting labelled LGBTQI2Setc more than once every year or two.

“I’m gay, and I’m now out at any meeting I go to, so I figure any meeting I’m in is gay. Lol”

But I still hear from newer A.A. members that they just wouldn’t feel comfortable at first sharing what’s going on in their life if there wasn’t a room full of people they knew could understand not only their alcoholism but the part of their life that feels less ‘mainstream’.

I’m get that. I’m keen on every A.A. meeting being open to anyone with a desire to stop drinking. I also believe our Fellowship is credible to the newcomer when it’s people they can relate to who are sharing what they were like, what happened, and what they’re like now. If that helps others like me find sobriety, I’m all for it. The same goes for meetings that help women or First Nations or expats feel more comfortable coming into A.A. as a whole.

I can’t count the number of people who have helped me during 35 years of recovery. But if it hadn’t been for a room full of gay guys and one lesbian on Wednesday nights when I first came to A.A., I don’t think I’d be here to say: Thank you for my sobriety.

Special Group History: Live & Let Live

By Dick G & Dianne R.

Moving to Ottawa from Washington DC, Keith P., missed the many gay and lesbian meetings he had attended while living in Washington. Along with Karen M., she and Keith founded the first A.A. meeting aimed at members of the gay and lesbian community in Ottawa.

The first meeting of Live and Let Live was on May 17, 1981, the Sunday of Victoria Day weekend, at the now defunct GO (Gays of Ottawa) Centre. The meeting slowly grew by word of mouth and notices at the GO Centre.

In September 1981, Dianne R. a member of the Live and Let Live, and Secretary of the Ottawa Intergroup, requested Live and Let Live be added to the Ottawa meeting directory. After some resistance, the group was supported by an Old-timer at Intergroup who pointed out that if GSO could list gay meetings why couldn't Ottawa. A compromise was reached and Live and Let Live was added to the meeting directory, not as a gay/lesbian meeting, but rather as located at Gays of Ottawa.

In those early days the meeting was met with hostility. There are stories of 'spies' attending the meeting to see who was there and of members of the group being ostracised because of their attendance at the meeting. Live and Let Live volunteered to host meeting at the 1982 Alkathon and were scheduled at 3 a.m. As late as the 2007 Alkathon, the group faced challenges; when a member of the group was asked to speak at 7

p.m. more than a couple of attendees left the meeting.

From those early days with only a few members Live and Let Live grew to a core membership of about 20 regular members and scores of occasional drop-ins. The AIDS Crisis galvanized and decimated the gay community in Ottawa. Live and Let Live was not spared the tragedy of AIDS in the late 80s and 90s. Despite this, Live and Let Live managed to continue and was known for hosting well attended Christmas parties with upwards of 60 people. One memorable Christmas Party in the mid-90s was a dress-up affair with over 150 members and friends.

Over the years, the meeting relocated many times, moving from the GO Centre to the Sandy Hill Community Centre, back to the GO Centre, to St. Joseph's Parish Hall, and finally to St. Paul's Eastern United Church. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Live and Let Live, like many other groups, pivoted to an online meeting. At the time of this writing, Live and Let Live no longer has a physical home as St. Paul's Eastern United Church has closed.



Shedding.

By Lilly W.

As humans, we are constantly evolving and growing, a process often described metaphorically as "shedding." Shedding in this context refers to letting go of old beliefs, habits, relationships, and ways of thinking that no longer serve us, and embracing new perspectives and experiences as we evolve into a new version of ourselves.

To tap into our own uniqueness amidst the influences of others without being weighed down by their trauma or drama, it is essential to cultivate a strong sense of self-awareness, boundaries, and self-compassion.

We often find ourselves shedding old friends, outdated truths, habits, thoughts, and ways of being as we grow and evolve. Have you ever encountered someone who is harboring bitterness and anger, yet denies or suppresses these feelings? It can be challenging to witness such behavior. I recently experienced a difficult period but have since emerged from it. Being part of a 12-step program has been beneficial to me for various reasons. In this supportive environment, I am surrounded by friends who have engaged in introspection and self-improvement. They have taken stock of their own actions and emotions, and as a result, they do not feel compelled to project onto others. While my friends in the program may not have delved into mystical or metaphysical concepts, they have a solid understanding of their own identities, particularly as they progress through the program's fourth and fifth steps. Here are some strategies to help navigate this process:

1. **Self-awareness:** Take time to reflect on your own values, beliefs, and desires separate from external influences. Journaling, meditation, or therapy can be helpful tools for clarifying your own thoughts and feelings.

2. **Boundaries:** Establishing healthy boundaries is crucial for protecting your energy and maintaining a sense of self. Learn to recognize when someone else's emotions or beliefs are encroaching on your own, and assertively communicate your limits.

3. **Self-compassion:** Treat yourself with kindness and understanding as you navigate your own growth journey. Practice self-care activities that nurture your mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

4. **Surround yourself with supportive people:** Seek out relationships with individuals who uplift and empower you, and who respect your boundaries. Engaging with a supportive community, like a 12-step program, can provide a space for growth and connection with others on a similar path.

5. **Detachment:** When faced with negativity or toxic energy from others, (energy vampires) practice detachment by not internalizing their emotions or taking responsibility for their feelings. Allow others to express themselves without feeling obligated to absorb their negativity.

Remember that each person's journey of shedding and growth is unique, and it's essential to prioritize your own well-being and authenticity throughout this process. By staying true to yourself, setting boundaries, and surrounding yourself with supportive individuals, you can navigate the shedding process with grace and resilience.

Dear soul companions, let us strive for sobriety in our minds, bodies, and spirits. Sobriety transcends merely abstaining from addictive substances; it encompasses releasing bitterness, anger, self-doubt, and any negative elements that hinder our inner peace.

12 STEP CO-ORDINATOR

In 1935 Bill W , was desperately trying to stay sober. He thought that if he could talk to another alcoholic it might help. This thought turned into a fateful meeting with Dr. Bob and the rest is history.

" In spite of the great increase in the size and span of this global fellowship, at it's core remains simple and personal. Each day, somewhere in the world, recovery begins when one alcoholic simply talks with another alcoholic, sharing experience, strength and hope " we must not forget this is life or death to some.

Twelfth Step Calls occur when an A.A. member has a conversation with a newcomer about how they recovered from alcoholism. When an alcoholic gains the confidence of another by having this conversation, both the newcomer and the A.A. member benefit. For the newcomer, they are learning about a possible solution to their alcoholism. For the A.A. member, they are taking out an “insurance policy” against a future slip by passing onto the newcomer what was passed onto them when they first came to A.A.

Twelfth Step Calls today are no different than they were in 1935. They are still two (or more) alcoholics coming together to have a conversation about recovery from alcoholism. While many Twelfth Step Calls are still conducted through face to face conversations, some may also be conducted by telephone.

Intergroup is looking for a 12-step coordinator that will facilitate these connections, and manage the 12-step volunteer list. This is an incredibly important service, to help the still struggling alcoholic. For more info please reach out to please reach out to Steve R at 12step@ottawaaa.org.

In addition, we are also looking for people to make 12 step calls in the Kanata and Barrhaven areas. Please reach out to Steve.



TAS NEEDS YOU!

Our Primary Purpose is to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

Telephone Answering Service (TAS) is the front line when the alcoholic reaches out for help. TAS is a help-line there for people reaching out, staffed by volunteer members of A.A. These volunteers respond to a wide range of calls from questions about meeting locations to providing peer support to supporting someone in distress. For someone in desperate need, this could be their first step towards getting support. And we need your voice to be on the other end of the phone.

Taking a TAS shift is a great way to do service in A.A., and can be done in person or virtually. You can do it from home. It can be done together with your sponsor, or with a group of people. TAS is based out of the Intergroup Office. This is a service commitment that can be picked up on a monthly basis either as an individual or as a group. Steve R, the TAS coordinator, has a slick calendar that shows what shifts are available. A shift is 3 hours. Check out the calendar here:

[TAS Calendar – Ottawa Area Intergroup \(ottawaaa.org\)](http://ottawaaa.org)

Mario C, who often takes on the commitment for the Freedom Group, had this to say:

“most people that call in are looking for a meeting and I help them find something in their part of town. There was one caller I remember—they were concerned that it was a religious program—I was able to steer them towards the spirituality of A.A. The training you get is good and easy to follow. In terms of what qualities you need—kindness, a willingness to listen, and some general knowledge of A.A. steps and traditions and the big book.”

Thanks Mario!!

The sobriety requirement for this commitment is 1 year. If you have less, bring your sponsor.



Webmaster Wanted

Ottawaaa.org seeking an
Alternate Webmaster



Please contact
webmaster@ottawaaa.org
if you have interest in this
rewarding service
position.

AA

**CELEBRATING
50 Year Plus Members**

WHEN

SATURDAY JUNE 15 2024

1 TO 4:30 PM

WHERE

**St. Thomas à Becket Church
4320 Saint-Anne St,
Pierrefonds-Roxboro,
Montreal Quebec H9H 4Y7**

PROGRAM

New Life Group Hosts

Regular Speaker Meeting
Celebrate/Honour The Pioneers
7th Tradition
The Lords Prayer
Raffle of Pioneer Signed Big Books
Pot-Luck Lunch

COST

**FREE
EVERYONE WELCOME**

PIONEERS

UNITÉ

Rassemblement Vanier

Samedi, le 15 Juin, 2024

10h00 - 21h00



Journée de service
organisée par
la délégation
Région 83 AA

10\$ en prévente ou
disponible à la porte
virement bancaire

Conférenciers,
Panels,
Dîner,
Souper

7ième Tradition
BBQ



Alcoholics Anonymous 
Area 83 Eastern Ontario International

Centre communautaire Richelieu-Vanier, 300 Pères Blancs
virement bancaire - vanierroundup@gmail.com

UNITY

Vanier Round~Up

Saturday, June 15, 2024
10am - 9pm



Service Day with
Area 83 AA Delegate

\$10 in advance
or at the door
e-transfer

Speakers,
Panels,
Lunch,
Dinner

7th Tradition
BBQ



Alcoholics Anonymous 
Area 83 Eastern Ontario International

Richelieu Community Centre, 300 Pères Blancs
e-transfer - vanierroundup@gmail.com



2024 Chelsea Round up

13 July 2024

10:30 am - 8:00 pm

St. Mary Magdalene Church
537 Rte., 105
Chelsea, QC
J9B 1L2



Pot-Luck lunch
Spaghetti dinner

7th Tradition

POC:

chelseabbaa@outlook.com



Scan me for this poster!

THE LAKESHORE DISTRICTS

Conference



SPEAKERS!

PATT O.
LAGUNA BEACH, CA
(BANQUET SPEAKER)

TAURY S.
NEW YORK CITY

KERRY O.
OTTAWA, ON



WITH ALANON PARTICIPATION

VISIT AALDC.ORG TO GET YOUR TICKET AND FOR ADDITIONAL PANELS AND SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENTS!

**BOOK YOUR HOTEL BEFORE
7/16/2024**

Heydenshore Pavilion
589 Water St, Whitby, ON, L1N 9V9

AUG | 16-18 | 2024

\$25 Virtual & General Admission | \$45 Banquet
VISIT **AALDC.ORG** TO GET YOUR TICKET



SCAN ME

Eastern Canada Regional Forum

August 23-25, 2024
Delta Hotels by Marriott
Ottawa, Ontario



Please join us for a weekend full of AA information and fellowship with Trusted Servants and GSO Staff!

Interested in Volunteering? Please email
ecrf2024@area83aa.org

More information available on the Area 83 website at the QR code above or at <https://www.aa.org/regional-and-local-forums>

Forum territorial de l'Est du Canada 2024

23-25 août 2024
Hôtel Delta Centre-ville
101 rue Lyon N
Ottawa, Ontario

Joignez-vous à nous pour un week-end rempli d'informations sur les AA, de fraternité avec des serveurs de confiance et le personnel du BSG !

Pour plus d'informations, voir le site de la Région 83



Inscription gratuite dès le 24 juin ici:
<https://www.aa.org/fr/regional-and-local-forums>

Lien de réservation d'hôtel



Si vous êtes intéressés à faire du bénévolat, envoyer un courriel à : ecrf2024@area83aa.org

Eastern Canada Regional Forum 2024

Ottawa, Ontario
August 23-25, 2024
Delta Hotel City Center
101 Lyon St N

Please join us for a weekend full of AA information and fellowship with Trusted Servants and GSO Staff!

More info
on Area 83
Website



Registration is free and begins June 24th at <https://www.aa.org/regional-and-local-forums>

Hotel Booking Link



Interested in volunteering? Please email
ecrf2024@area83aa.org

THE LOVE & SERVICE



Where We Share Stories of Applying the AA Steps, Traditions and Concepts

FORMERLY THE UNITY & SERVICE CONFERENCE
HOSTED BY THE LOVE & SERVICE GROUP

MAIN SPEAKERS:

BILLY N. ~ PALM BEACH GARDENS, FL
ARISA B. ~ BOSTON, MA

OCT | FRI | 2024
11

OCT | SAT | 2024
12

REGISTRATION OPENS : 3:00PM
EVENT : 6:00PM – 8:30PM

EVENT STARTS : 9:00AM
EVENT ENDS : 10:00PM

EVENT COST \$45

INCLUDES SATURDAY CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & LUNCH

SATURDAY DINNER COST \$55

OPTIONAL



HYBRID EVENT
SPANISH INTERPRETATION
ASL INTERPRETATION



THE HOPE CENTER | 2275 MORELLO AVE | PLEASANT HILL | CA

For more information email 3LegaciesConf@LoveAndServiceGroup.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 A.A. 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 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 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

Contact Information

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

Ottawa Area Intergroup

Chair	John D.	chair@ottawaaa.org
Vice-Chair	Jeff L.	vice@ottawaaa.org
Secretary	Dick G.	secretary@ottawaaa.org
Treasurer	Stephan P.	treasurer@ottawaaa.org
Website	Paul D.	webmaster@ottawaaa.org
Telephone Answering Service	Steve R.	tas@ottawaaa.org
Literature	Walter H.	literature@ottawaaa.org
12-Step Coordinator	Steve R.	12step@ottawaaa.org
Spring Conference	vacant	spring@ottawaaa.org
Eastern Ontario Conference	Kevin O.	eoc@ottawaaa.org
Newsletter	George H.	newsletter@ottawaaa.org

Ottawa General Service Districts and Committees

District 54- Ottawa East	Karen A.	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	Meaghan S.	archives@ottawaaa.org
Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre (detox)	Pauline E.	owmc@ottawaaa.org

Back Page

General Notes

- **Is your A.A. 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 A.A. members working the A.A. 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 A.A. Fellowship.
- The editor of “Our Primary Purpose” reserves the right to accept or reject material for publication, based on the A.A. traditions. Note: this policy is consistent with that of the A.A. Grapevine. Articles are not intended to be statements of A.A. policy, nor does publication of any article constitute endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or Ottawa Area Intergroup. Submissions are always welcome. For Newsletter Submissions, send to: newsletter@ottawaaa.org
- Article submissions are greatly appreciated by the 15th day of the month preceding publication date.