

October 2025

# Our Primary Purpose

Ottawa Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous

EASTERN ONTARIO FALL  
CONFERENCE 2025





# EASTERN ONTARIO FALL CONFERENCE 2025

## Hello from the Fall Conference Committee!

We are almost there, and it's been a great ride so far. We are so looking forward to getting together with everyone on the 17th and 18th of this month.

A couple of interesting tidbits.... For all the history buffs out there, the Archivist from Toronto will be having a display to share over the weekend. And don't forget to check out the fun fact table. You might just find it handy in the bonus round for the Family Feud game!

There is so much to do, we hope you get to experience as much as possible. This is our last article before the event so take care, show up and enjoy. And for those curious about service, join a past delegate on Friday with any questions you may have. ***Service really is a blast, and it opens you up to a whole new world. One you will love!***

The agenda has been included again this month to give you a heads up on the panels, speaker meetings, AlAnon, meditation sessions, the banquet, a delightful hospitality room and of course, the dance.

And again, we would like to express our gratitude for all the support the Conference has received.

See you there!

Yours in love and service

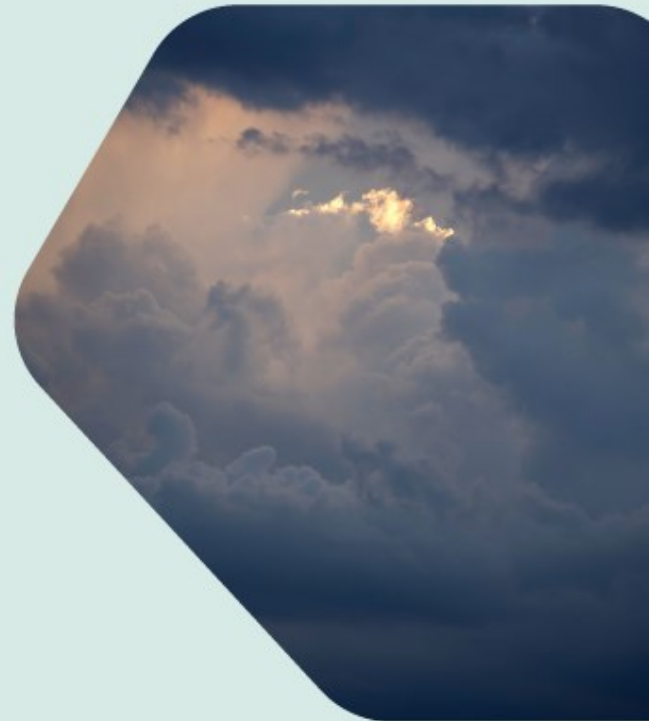
EOC 2025

## 71st Annual Eastern Ontario Fall Conference

**FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT**  
"From Page 110 of the 12 & 12"

**October 17 & 18, 2025**

**An Alcoholics Anonymous event  
with Al-Anon participation**



Hellenic Banquet Center  
1315 Prince of Wales Drive,  
Ottawa, ON

# EASTERN ONTARIO FALL CONFERENCE 2025—Program

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2025

Registration opens at 11:00 a.m.  
Hospitality opens at 10:30 a.m.

### MAIN ROOM

- 12:00-1:00 p.m. PANEL #1 - **SAME READINESS**
- 1:30-2:30 p.m. PANEL #2 - **THE GREAT NEWS**
- 3:00-4:00 p.m. PANEL #3 - **WE ABSOLUTELY INSIST ON ENJOYING LIFE**
- 4:30-5:30 p.m. Speaker Meeting (*French*)
- 5:30-6:45 p.m. Supper break
- 6:45-7:00 p.m. Conference Opening Remarks
- 7:00-8:00 p.m. **OPENING SPEAKER MEETING** / Mel C. from Toronto, Ont.
- 8:30 p.m. - Dance the Night Away with DJ SPANKY

### DOWNSTAIRS (Senior Centre)

- 11:30-11:45 a.m. Guided Meditation
- 12:30-2:00 p.m. WORKSHOP - Step 11 "An Individual Adventure"
- 2:30-2:45 p.m. Guided Meditation
- 3:00-4:30 p.m. WORKSHOP - "Our Twelfth Suggestion" One on One Sponsorship
- 5:00-6:00 p.m. - "AT YOUR SERVICE"- Q&A session. Bring your questions! Facilitated by Panel 59 Past Delegate

### AL-ANON CONFERENCE ROOM

- 12:00-1:00 p.m. PANEL #1 - "How Al-Anon Has Lightened My Life"
- 1:30-3:00 p.m. WORKSHOP - "Dual Members -Why do AA Members also attend Al-Anon?"
- 3:30-4:30 p.m. PANEL #2 - "Thriving not just surviving"

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2025

Registration opens at 8:00 a.m.  
Hospitality opens at 8:00 a.m.

### MAIN ROOM

- 9:00-10:00 a.m. PANEL #1 - **ADVERSITY TRULY INTRODUCES US TO OURSELVES**
- 10:30-11:30 a.m. PANEL #2 - **FROM THE INSIDE OUT**
- Lunch Break
- 1:00-2:00 p.m. **AFTERNOON SPEAKER MEETING** / Joshua H. from Prince Edward County
- 2:30-4:00 p.m. **FAMILY PANEL - COMING OUT OF THE DARKNESS TOGETHER** - A.A. Al-Anon and Alateen
- 4:30 p.m. Banquet Setup
- 5:30 p.m. Banquet Hall opens
- 7:00-7:30 p.m. Sobriety count up, closing remarks, Introduction of Vice Chair, remarks from Ottawa Intergroup Chair
- 8:00-9:00 p.m. - **MAIN BANQUET SPEAKER** / Leslie K. from Modesto, CA.

### DOWNSTAIRS (Senior Centre)

- 8:30-8:45 a.m. Guided Meditation
- 10:00-12:00 p.m. WORKSHOP - **Traditions in the Homegroup & Relationships**
- 12:15-12:30 p.m. Guided Meditation
- 2:30-4:30 p.m. WORKSHOP - **Step 10-Continued...**
- 5:00-6:30 p.m. **TRIVIA / OPEN MIC** sharing on your favorite literature and why. (A.A. Al-Anon)

### AL-ANON CONFERENCE ROOM

- 9:00-10:00 a.m. PANEL #1 - "Living with the Slogans"
- 10:30-11:30 a.m. PANEL #2 - "Am I good enough"
- Lunch Break
- 1:00-2:00 p.m. **MAIN SPEAKER** / Jason W. from Georgetown, Ontario
- 2:30-4:00 p.m. - **FAMILY PANEL** in the Main Conference Room

# Tradition Ten

By Joe F.

***“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought to never be drawn into public controversy.”***

Thanks to Tradition Nine, A.A. as a whole can neither be led into temptation from the pursuit of money, property and prestige nor can it be destroyed from within by a governing body. I bet you think this means that we out of the woods; that we're now free to carry the message so long as we treat who we see and what we hear inside the rooms of A.A. in confidence. What about who we see and what we hear outside of meetings?

The social climate we now live in is very different from the one which bore witness to the birth of Alcoholics Anonymous. Back then, going to a meeting was an all-day event if you were lucky enough to find one that was “local to you”. Back then, if you needed a meeting and you had the time but you didn't own a vehicle, you had to break your own anonymity to someone who had the vehicle and the time and the willingness. Back then, when anonymity was paramount and trust was sacred, I doubt that one member would even try to catch the eye of another member on the street, let alone talk about who they saw or what they heard.

Picture it ... Ottawa, 2025. Its 11:30, and suddenly, I need a meeting. All I had to do was hire an Uber and I arrived 15 minutes later to a meeting local to me with my anonymity intact. The weather was beautiful so I stayed outside for the meeting before the meeting. From a distance, I heard some members of A.A. referring to other members of A.A. by name. I also heard their opinions on many more outside issues, and gratefully, I remembered when that's all I ever did.

Twenty years ago, I told my mom that I'd meet her at the funeral home at 2:00 so we could pay our respects to my aunt. When I went in at 2:05, I was swarmed by family members who told me that she broke down and ran out the minute she walked in. I immediately took a taxi to her place, and surprisingly, she answered the door and let me

in. She told me that something someone said to her twenty-five years before came flooding back to her the minute she saw him. Even though it had nothing to do with him, he told her that she got exactly what she deserved because he thought that she broke up her family. And then she said, “When is it ever going to be about me?” That's when I heard the switch flip. That's when I chose to confront him even though it had nothing to do with me.

Soon after, I went to his house unannounced. I was filled with justified anger and I expected him to apologize to us. When he opened the door, I told him what I thought about him and what he said to my mom, and I couldn't or wouldn't stop there. I also told him what people said about him and who said it. That's when my aunt appeared out of nowhere. She used language I can't repeat to tell me exactly what she thought about me and what I just said and she didn't stop there. She warned me about what my life would be like if I continued to “talk out of school.” She also made me apologize to him and I resented her for it. Page 80 of the Big Book says “He thus used his own wrong-doing as a means of destroying the reputation of another.”

Bill W. said that the Traditions are the spiritual principles of the Steps; that they apply to every A.A. member and every A.A. group. Step Ten suggests that I continue to take a personal inventory and when I am wrong, promptly admit it. Tradition Ten suggests that my name will become controversial when I have opinions on outside issues. Therefore, when I have opinions on outside issues, I hurt me. When I act on those opinions, I hurt you. My sponsor helps me to admit my wrongs, especially the ones I cannot or will not admit to. But, he can only help me if I am honest, “open-minded to conviction and as willing to listen as the dying can be.” Page 67 of the Big Book says “putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes.”

If nothing changes, nothing changes.

# Zooming the AA Way

By Lilly

Be Aware, Never Afraid — Zooming the AA Way

Hello, my name is Lilly, and I am a grateful alcoholic.

At a Zoom meeting not long ago, I heard something that struck me to the core:

“When I am in the rooms of AA, I am an alcoholic. When I am out drinking, I am a drunk.”

That truth landed hard.

I first entered these rooms in October 1991 and remained sober for 22 years. Meetings were different then, a greeter at the door, the smell of fresh coffee and stale cigarettes, the scrape of chairs across the floor, and the joy of wrapping our arms around one another in the sacred circle of acceptance.

But in October 2013, I became a drunk again. For the next six years, I rode with the four horsemen: Terror, Frustration, Bewilderment, and Despair. To that I would add Grief. In just three years, I lost a house to fire, my daughter, my mother, my father, and a business. That is not an excuse to drink, but when the dark night of the soul entered, I did not pray for guidance. Instead, I got angry with God and sought solace in a bottle.

My life became dark and dirty. Only when I hit bottom, ending up in an ambulance in December 2019, did light begin to enter again.

Looking back, one of the biggest mistakes I made in sobriety was dancing with complacency. The promises had come true for me, and I grew arrogant. I stopped going to meetings, stopped reaching out, and put my Big Book away. I thought I had all the answers.

The day after that ambulance ride, I knew I had none. I had to humble myself and admit that deeper work was required, this time, real work.

In early 2020 I made it to a few meetings, and then COVID struck. At first I used Zoom for friends and clients, but not for AA. When a friend suggested it, I chose not to complain about the pandemic but to be aware, not afraid. COVID gave me the time to go deeper, to do the labor required to stay sober. Not just by putting the cork in the bottle, but by asking: “How do I want to live out the rest of my days?”

The answer: Stay sober. Get to meetings. Find a





sponsor. Begin again.

Daily Zoom meetings quickly became my lifeline. I joined gatherings from Newfoundland, Bali, and Ottawa. Around the world in 24 hours, I discovered the same truth: no matter where we live or what our circumstances, we all share the same commitment, “Just for today, I will not drink.”

Zoom gave me the gift of more meetings than I ever imagined possible, without the hours of driving. I could listen, share, and volunteer daily. And here is what humbled me most: in all my 22 years of sobriety, I was still living out my addiction. I was not drinking, but I was not living life on life’s terms.

I had not fully given myself over to a Higher Power. I had not practiced the Steps in all my affairs. Step Two, “restoring us to sanity”, is not only about not drinking. For me, it became about handing over everything: my worries, my spending, my eating, my anger.

These patterns kept me stuck.

No more victimhood. No more wishing for a drink in times of chaos. No more bargaining with my self-worth or sabotaging my sobriety with stinking thinking.

Zoom gave me the magnifying glass to look into the cracks and valleys of my behaviors and shine light on them.

So now I don’t just walk into a sober 24.

I Zoom into each day, sober, healthy, and grateful to be alive.

Yes, COVID has its shadow. But the light it offered me is profound: the friends I’ve made in daily meetings, the soul companions I now walk and talk with outside the Zoom rooms. Together, in sobriety and in Zoom, we rise into our highest potential.

So I repeat what I heard at the start:

“Today, I am an alcoholic. I am not a drunk.”

Just for today, I will Zoom into another day of sobriety, with friendship, the 12 Steps, the guidance of my sponsor, and gratitude for the gift of Zoom.

Be aware. Never afraid. Zoom the AA way.



“I know you don’t want anything to upset your serenity dear, but the house is on fire.”

# SOAAR 2025 OTTAWA: RECAP

By Michel D, Chair 2025

This year's **Secular Ontario Alcoholics Anonymous Roundup (SOAAR) in Ottawa** was the fourth biennial event in a series that began in Toronto, followed by Hamilton and Kingston. The event was held on September 27 at the Lord Elgin Hotel, drawing AA members from across Ontario, Quebec and the USA for a day of panels, speakers, and community building under the theme **"Breaking Barriers"**.

The series began in Toronto in 2017, specifically designed for agnostics, atheists, freethinkers, and secular members within Alcoholics Anonymous. It then moved to Hamilton (2019) and Kingston (2023), before being held in Ottawa for its fourth edition. The event did not take place in 2021 due to the pandemic.

The event included speakers, engaging panels, and opportunities for networking among attendees who share an interest in a secular approach to recovery. Participants were encouraged to talk about their experiences and insights focusing on inclusivity and breaking down barriers within the AA community.

The roundup's goal was twofold: to provide secular AA members a chance to connect in person and to inform traditional AA members on what secularism in AA looks like. In this regard, it was very successful, it attracted no less than 125 attendees, twice the number of members who attend the three weekly secular groups in Ottawa. The "Breaking Barriers" theme for 2025

highlighted the need to undo stigmas and open up recovery spaces to those of all belief or non-belief backgrounds, making the program particularly welcoming to those who may feel marginalized in traditional AA groups.

Stacy C., Vice-chair and MC, launched the day's activities by introducing the first keynote speaker Joe C., who traced the evolution of special composition groups in AA and their vital role in widening the doors of AA to all members. It was followed by a panel led by Michel D., with Past Delegate (panel 73) for Area 83 James O'D. and Doris Mc., who described why secular groups do not break any of the AA traditions. The next session featured Ottawa AA members Nick D. and Susan M. who shared their journeys within secular AA.

4e RASSEMBLEMENT BISANNUEL LAÏQUE DES ALCOOLIKUES ANONYMES DE L'ONTARIO

## SOAAR 2025 OTTAWA

4th BIENNIAL SECULAR ONTARIO ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS ROUNDUP

---

**Saturday, September 27th, 2025    9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**  
 Lord Elgin Hotel 100 Elgin St.

---

## *Breaking Barriers*

The afternoon focused on defining what "secular" means in AA, with moderator Oliver S. and panelists Margarita A. (a member of the Board of Directors of International Conference of Secular AA (ICSAA) and Andy M. who emphasized the importance of secular meetings in their recovery. Rick B. then provided hands-on guidance for approaching AA's first three



steps from a non-theistic angle, making recovery accessible to all beliefs. Keynote speaker Beth H closed the event with a presentation on self-nurturing and reframing AA for those who struggle with self-esteem, offering practical advice for meeting personal needs and promoting growth, regardless of childhood experiences. Her presentation was largely based on her book *We're Not All Egomaniacs: Adapting the Twelve Steps for Alcoholics with Low Self-Esteem*.

The Ottawa Organizing Committee is particularly grateful to all of the participants in this year's program, especially those who came from far and wide to support our event: James O'D. (Newfoundland), Joe C. (Toronto), as well as Margarita A. and Beth H. (both from Phoenix). Our thanks go out to all those who attended our roundup from different parts of the province, Quebec and the USA. You helped make it the success that it was. Finally, I would be remiss if I forgot to mention the

tremendous amount of work that the Organizing Committee accomplished in the year leading up to SOAAR 2025 – heartfelt thanks to Andy M., Chris K., Christine G., Doris Mc., Eric S., Jason M., Kim B., Nick D., Oliver S., Rick B., and Stacy C. What is more, most of the committee members have agreed to continue their work promoting secularism in AA in and around Ottawa as a working committee that will meet quarterly starting next month. They also agreed that our city will submit a bid to host the ICSAA in 2028. Our proposal will be presented at the International Conference of Secular AA in Phoenix in the fall of 2026.

SOAAR 2025 in Ottawa marked another successful chapter in Ontario's history of secular AA gatherings, serving as an open forum that underscores the diversity and unity of the recovery community within AA. We are encouraged by the growth of secularism in AA and are very much looking forward to the next SOAAR in 2027.





# TAS NEEDS YOU!

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

Intergroup is actively seeking new groups or members wanting to extend the hand of AA to take on this rewarding service commitment on a monthly rotation. We would like to invite any experienced member to pick up an open shift or begin a new monthly commitment. Most of the open shifts are during the day. Look over the [calendar](#) to see what works for you.

TAS can be contacted at:  
[tas@ottawaaa.org](mailto:tas@ottawaaa.org).



Also available:

- 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 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, or an experienced member or Sponsor.

Thank you in advance for your service.



# Service Opportunities

## Ottawa Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous

Service Opportunity	Contact Info	Notes:
Telephone Answering Service	<a href="mailto:tas@ottawaaa.org">tas@ottawaaa.org</a>	Vacant shifts available—one time or monthly.
Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre (OWMC),	<a href="mailto:owmc@ottawaaa.org">owmc@ottawaaa.org</a>	Carry the message.
TAS Coordinator	<a href="mailto:chair@ottawaaa.org">chair@ottawaaa.org</a>	Please email the chair to learn about the role of the Telephone Answering Service Coordinator
12-Step Coordinator	<a href="mailto:chair@ottawaaa.org">chair@ottawaaa.org</a>	Please email the chair to learn about the role of 12-step coordinator.





# 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 48 MEETING**..... First Tuesday (7:00 pm)  
(in-person: [Winchester United Church 519 St. Lawrence St, Winchester](#) )

**DISTRICT 54 MEETING**.....Second 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 (6:00 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

Telephone: {613} 237-6000

Email: [info@ottawaaa.org](mailto:info@ottawaaa.org)

## Ottawa Area Intergroup

<b>Chair</b>	Debbie W.	<a href="mailto:chair@ottawaaa.org">chair@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Kevin M.	<a href="mailto:vicechair@ottawaaa.org">vicechair@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Catherine B.	<a href="mailto:secretary@ottawaaa.org">secretary@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	George W.	<a href="mailto:treasurer@ottawaaa.org">treasurer@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Website</b>	Karol G.	<a href="mailto:webmaster@ottawaaa.org">webmaster@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Telephone Answering Service</b>	Kevin M.	<a href="mailto:tas@ottawaaa.org">tas@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Literature</b>	Barry D.E	<a href="mailto:literature@ottawaaa.org">literature@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>12-Step Coordinator</b>	Vacant	<a href="mailto:12step@ottawaaa.org">12step@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Spring Conference</b>	Lorrie W.	<a href="mailto:spring@ottawaaa.org">spring@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Eastern Ontario Conference</b>	Darlene K.	<a href="mailto:eoc@ottawaaa.org">eoc@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Summerathon</b>	Vacant	<a href="mailto:summerathon@ottawaaa.org">summerathon@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Newsletter</b>	George H.	<a href="mailto:newsletter@ottawaaa.org">newsletter@ottawaaa.org</a>

## Ottawa General Service Districts and Committees

<b>District 48– Seaway Valley North</b>	Sara M.	<a href="mailto:dcmdistrict48@gmail.com">dcmdistrict48@gmail.com</a>
<b>District 54- Ottawa East</b>	Karen A.	<a href="mailto:district54@ottawaaa.org">district54@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>District 62- Ottawa West</b>	Steve B.	<a href="mailto:district62@ottawaaa.org">district62@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Cooperation with Professionals</b>	Chris M.	<a href="mailto:cpc@ottawaaa.org">cpc@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Public Information/Media Contact</b>	Chris M.	<a href="mailto:pi@ottawaaa.org">pi@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Corrections Facilities &amp; Treatment</b>	Tim F.	<a href="mailto:cft@ottawaaa.org">cft@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Archives</b>	Meaghan S.	<a href="mailto:archives@ottawaaa.org">archives@ottawaaa.org</a>
<b>Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre (detox)</b>	Paul D.	<a href="mailto:owmc@ottawaaa.org">owmc@ottawaaa.org</a>



# Back Page

## General Notes

- **Is your A.A. Group's meeting information correct on [ottawaaa.org](http://ottawaaa.org)?** Please send all updates as well as temporary closures to Ottawa Intergroup at: [info@ottawaaa.org](mailto:info@ottawaaa.org).
- **Do you have a question for the Intergroup Board?** Please email us with your 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 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](mailto:newsletter@ottawaaa.org)
- Article submissions are greatly appreciated by the end of the month preceding publication date.
- Image on Page 8—attributed to DG, Montreal.