

# *Fellowship Centre Newsletter: August 2022*



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## **MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR**

In 1974 the Alberta Government declared the first Monday of August an annual holiday, called Heritage Day, to celebrate the varied cultural backgrounds of Albertans. Mutual support groups held at the Centre welcome attendees from all cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the Fellowship Centre celebrates cultural diversity by including in its repertoire of weekly meetings the Indo-Canadian Living Sober and Punjabi Big Book Study AA meetings for those who speak Punjabi, Hindi, or Urdu. Celebrating diversity in general the Centre hosts weekly mutual support recovery meetings including Alcoholics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, and Sex Addicts Anonymous. The Fellowship Centre is proud of its diversity, and I hope we can do more to invite and celebrate diversity in meetings. If you have the experience and the desire to start a new meeting at the Centre, please email me at FellowshipNewsletter@shaw.ca. An Al-Anon meeting is needed. If you would like to contribute to the Newsletter, have ideas on how the Newsletter could be improved or would like the Newsletter emailed to you each month, email me at FellowshipNewsletter@shaw.ca.

Yours in Service,  
Editor Julia, Centre Volunteer

## **ABOUT THE SOUTH EDMONTON FELLOWSHIP CENTRE**

The South Edmonton Fellowship Centre is an Alberta registered non-profit society run entirely by unpaid volunteers. It provides a safe and welcoming place for alcoholism/addiction mutual support meetings, events, and activities to help those suffering to achieve sobriety and improve their lives. Open in November 2021, the Centre currently hosts 18 weekly mutual support recovery meetings. As we heard during pandemic lockdowns, the Government of Alberta considers such mutual support groups an essential service to preserve life, health, and public safety.



## **GIVING TO THE SOUTH EDMONTON FELLOWSHIP CENTRE**

Donations from the recovery community keep the doors of the Fellowship Centre open. In 2020, without a location, the Centre received \$5990.00 in donations. In 2021, \$3462.00 was received in donations. So far in 2022, donations have totaled \$2183.00. Such generosity contributes to the continuing operation of recovery support groups, events, and activities, ensuring support for those who reach out for help with any type of addiction. E-Transfer donations to [info@fellowship-centre.org](mailto:info@fellowship-centre.org) (no security question).

### **THE TWELVE STEPS: STEP EIGHT**

“We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory. We subjected ourselves to a drastic self- appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over our addictions. (A.A. Big Book, p. 76 edited)

Because there are 12 Steps and 12 months in a year, some recovery programs focus on a Step each month. This month is August which corresponds with Step 8 “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”

“...This and the next two Steps are concerned with personal relations. Learning to live with others is a fascinating adventure. Obstacles include reluctance to forgive; non admission of wrongs to others; purposeful forgetting. Deepening insight results from thoroughness. Step Eight is the beginning of the end of isolation” (Paraphrased from 12 x 12, page 7).

Cocaine Anonymous is a fellowship for addicts seeking recovery. Their guide to the Twelve Steps published by Cocaine Anonymous® World Services, Inc. states “In Step Eight, we list all the people we have harmed, and we pray for the willingness to make amends to them all. Most of the amends we need to make are disclosed in the resentment inventory (Big Book page 67) and our sexual inventory (Big Book pages 68-70). We also include anyone else we have harmed who isn't listed in our Fourth-Step inventory.

Whether you are working the 12 Steps of AA, CA, NA, GA, SAA or any other program, “Step 8 can be humbling, but it can also lead to growth. The Eighth Step involves making amends with others who may have been harmed by your alcohol or drug use. This Step is a chance to grow and improve your relationships with your friends and loved ones—which will only help you going forward in your recovery.” A Study of Step 8 – [12step.org](http://12step.org)

## **SPOTLIGHT ON A MEETING: SEX ADDICTS ANONOMOUS SATURDAY 7:00 PM**

### **Part 1**

Our goal when entering the Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) program is abstinence from one or more specific sexual behaviors. But unlike programs for recovering alcoholics or drug addicts, SAA does not have a universal definition of abstinence.

Most of us have no desire to stop being sexual altogether. It is not sex, in and of itself, that causes us problems, but the addiction to certain sexual behaviors. In SAA we will be better able to determine what behavior is addictive and what is healthy. However, the fellowship does not dictate to its members what is and isn't addictive sexual behavior. Instead, we have found that it is necessary for each member to define his or her own abstinence. To help us define our sexual sobriety, many of us use a tool developed within SAA called The Three Circles.

We draw three concentric circles, consisting of an inner, middle, and outer circle. With the help of our sponsor or others in recovery, we write down various behaviors in each of the three circles. In the inner circle we put the sexual behaviors we want to abstain from, the ones we consider "acting out." These are the behaviors that we identify, with our sponsor's guidance, as addictive, harmful, or unacceptable for us. In the middle circle we put behaviors that may lead to acting out, or that we are not sure about. In the outer circle we put healthy behaviors that enhance our life and our recovery.

### **Part 2**

Imagine a person dipping a plastic wand into a solution and blowing bubbles. The person keeps doing it over and over and eventually creates a giant bubble that engulfs the individual. This is a powerful image for expressing what happens to us as sex addicts.

Being hit with the obsession to act out is like being engulfed in a bubble. We are powerless and carried away by the all-encompassing power of our compulsions. In the grip of our addiction, we see the outside world through a transparent wall, but we can't communicate with it realistically because the wall cuts us off.

The bubble was created during those times when our minds were preoccupied with addictive thoughts and fantasies; it became full blown when we progressed to acting out our sexual rituals, and it burst only when the rituals ended. The exhibitionist who spent hours driving around in a car looking for victims was totally caught up in the bubble. The voyeur who waited outside a window hoping for a glimpse, the addict who met someone and ended up quickly in bed with them, the addict who cruises the streets for prostitutes, or the addict who spent countless hours viewing pornography-all these addicts were helplessly trapped in the bubble. The bubble is an appropriate, poetic image for many reasons. It expresses the radical nature of the addict's isolation. When we were in the bubble acting out, we existed in a secret world of our own creation where we sought thrills and pleasure. Unfortunately, this was also a world of shame and guilt, though these feelings did not hit us until the bubble burst, and we re-entered

the real world. Addicted, we then prepared to create the bubble once again to avoid living with feelings of shame, and thus we were isolated as prisoners within the addictive cycle.

The bubble is also an appropriate image to express the sense of escape we usually felt while acting out, as though we floated above all the burdensome responsibilities of normal life. The great and overwhelming realities of life were reduced to a single purpose. There was only one focus in our lives during those hours spent in the bubble. Life seemed immensely simplified.

Life also felt "safe" in the bubble. Ironically, the wall of the bubble surrounding us seemed protective even when it carried us into great danger, because we believed that as long as we stayed in our own isolated world nothing could really touch us. This is not to say that in the bubble we never experienced fear. On the contrary, fear of police, fear of discovery by a spouse, or fear of disease were often felt in the bubble. The addict, however, found a way to turn these fears into sources of stimulation that became part of the very "fix" that was sought. In the meantime, the real fears of life which we chose not to face—losing a job, financial insecurities, rejection by someone significant in our life—seemed far, far away, outside the bubble.

In an ironic way, we ourselves also felt "safe" in the bubble. This further illustrated how the complexities of life became reduced to single-minded simplicity. We never had to deal with the real complex fears of life; instead, all feelings were expressed only in relation to sex. This simplicity and safety enabled us to feel in control when we were in the bubble. We may have felt we could hide from the police, and therefore our fear only pumped up our adrenaline, making us feel more in control and powerful. To escape life's problems, we often resorted to acting out to feel the reassuring simplicity, safety, and control that being in the bubble provided.

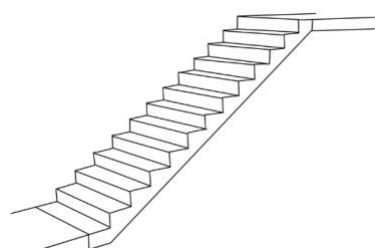
The bubble is also an appropriate image for acting out because it expresses the irony that in this "liberation" from the realities of life, we were trapped. We may have felt as if we were free, but, we were imprisoned—engulfed in a bubble that felt like total freedom to go anywhere and do anything. The problem, however, was that this simplistic, single-minded obsession that the bubble represents became more and more restrictive. Finally, we discovered that we no longer used the bubble; the bubble used us. Our freedom had become slavery.

The compulsion to enter the bubble is an expression of our powerlessness. When it burst, as it inevitably did, we felt the unmanageability of our lives. The unmanageability was profound because our escape into the bubble had prevented us from facing reality and learning the lessons necessary to effectively cope with life. In desperation, we sought recovery from our addiction.

"Our denial cracked, and we felt the full force of our unbearable situation. We saw that we were at the end of our rope and that all that was left was the knot. To continue to act out seemed impossible, and not to act out seemed equally impossible. We knew we had to change, even if we didn't know how. Out of this despair, we came to Sex Addicts Anonymous" (Sex Addicts Anonymous, page 9).

Earlier it was mentioned that, if you have gained considerable experience with a specific mutual support recovery meeting, you may choose to start such a meeting at the Fellowship Centre. Following is a list of 12 Step recovery programs:

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)	Families Anonymous (Fam-Anon)
Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACoA)	Food Addicts Anonymous (FAA)
Families of Alcoholics (Al-Anon)	Food Addicts in Recovery (FA)
Anorexics and Bulimics (ABA)	Gam-Anon (Gam-Anon)
Bettors Anonymous (BA)	Gamblers Anonymous (GA)
Castimonia (Castimonia)	Gamer-Anon (Gamer-Anon)
Chemically Dependent Anonymous (CDA)	GreySheeters Anonymous (GSA)
Chronic Pain Anonymous (CPA)	Heroin Anonymous (HA)
Clutterers Anonymous (CLA)	Love Addicts Anonymous (LAA)
Co-Anon Family Group (Co-Anon)	Mar-Anon Family Groups (Mar-Anon)
Cocaine Anonymous (CA)	Marijuana Anonymous (MA)
Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA)	Nar-Anon Family Groups (Nar-Anon)
Compulsive Eaters Anonymous (CEA)	Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
Computer Gaming Addicts (CGAA)	Neurotics Anonymous (Neura)
Co-Sex Addicts (COSA)	Nicotine Anonymous (NicA)
CoSex and Love Addicts (COSLAA)	On-Line Gamers Anonymous (OLGA)
Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA)	Overeaters Anonymous (OA)
Debtors Anonymous (DA)	Pills Anonymous (PA)
Depressed Anonymous (DepA)	Recoveries Anonymous (RA)
Dual Recovery Anonymous (DRA)	Recovering Couples Anonymous (RCA)
Eating Disorders Anonymous (EDA)	Self Harmers Anonymous (SHA)
Emotional Health Anonymous (EHA)	Self Mutilators Anonymous (SMA)
Emotions Anonymous (EA)	Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA)
	Sex and Love Addicts (SLAA)



<https://12step.org/references/12-step-versions/>

## HOW TO START A MUTUAL SUPPORT RECOVERY MEETING

What do you need to start a meeting? Very little, and nothing that is very tough if you have considerable experience with the type of meeting you hope to start. There are four essentials:

**A few people.** Besides yourself, you will need one or two other people who will take responsibility for the meetings: unlocking the door, making coffee...

The long form of Tradition 3 lays out the very simple requirements of a group:

*Our membership ought to include all who suffer from addiction. Hence, we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three addicts gathered together for sobriety may call themselves a mutual support recovery group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. (edited)*

**A place to meet.** You may use the Fellowship Centre as a location for the meeting. Check the schedule of ongoing meetings posted at the Centre and on the website. Choose an available day and time for your meeting and notify the President of the Centre.

**A meeting agenda.** You'll need a meeting agenda (or format). You may use the agenda of a different meeting and adapt it to suit your new group's desires and needs.

**Registration and publicity!** You will want to get the word out about your meeting so those who need it can attend. You can register with the Intergroup in your area and they will put you on their meeting list (Meeting Guide) shared online. And, in order to be an "official" recovery group – often required by the Intergroups before your meeting is listed – you can fill out a New Group Form and register with the General Service Office (GSO) for the program (GA, SAA, NA, etc.) That's pretty much it. If you have any other questions, send us an email. We would be glad to help.

Best of luck if you decide to launch a new recovery meeting!

By Roger C. <https://aaagnostica.org/how-to-start-an-aa-meeting/> (edited)

## Humor



"Nowadays every bottle seems  
to say 'drink me'."

(Permission to reprint granted under the CartoonStock license Type C1.)

### **Asked Why I Came to Gamblers Anonymous**

Told them I lost a bet.

### **I've got my first Gamblers Anonymous meeting tomorrow**

I rang them today to check the time. It's ten to one.

### **Is this Gamblers Anonymous?**

You bet!

### **Finally made the call to Gamblers Anonymous**

Bet them 3:1 they couldn't help me

## **WE AGNOSTICS**

Many members in Recovery, both newcomers and old timers, have been challenged by the concept of God. Some reject outright the whole idea of a supreme being while others of us are simply incapable of accepting a classical view of God.

The word Agnostic literally means one who rejects Gnosis, which is the claim that spiritual or mystical knowledge exists. At the other extreme, some Agnostics believe in God but assert that they do not comprehend what it is in which they believe. While spiritual traditions exist that do not invoke the concept of God, most 12-Step programs call for a “Higher Power of our own understanding.”

It is important that the newcomer who is interested in any program of recovery is not pressured to accept a classical belief about God and His existence. We expect to provide a safe space for inquiry into the concept of such a Higher Power that will be acceptable to you personally. We wish to show that our 12-step recovery programs are a system of practice, not of beliefs. Certain beliefs may help us in our personal journey towards sobriety, but we do not foist our beliefs on others. These programs call for the acknowledgment of forces in the universe outside of the will of the individual but do not attribute specific qualities to such power. Although some have found it helpful, it may not be necessary to believe that such an Intelligent Being actually exists with a will and intentions for each of us.

It is possible to achieve sobriety and stay sober & clean without anything more than a belief that recovery is possible.

We can follow the twelve steps without the overtones of moralism (the idea of imposing one’s morals on others) or subscribing to any specific faith, dogma, belief, or superstition. We do not need to have any opinion on the truth or falsity of any belief, but we do believe that you should respect all people’s right to their own beliefs and interpretations, even when you strongly disagree with those beliefs. We must also respect other’s skepticism about any beliefs we may have. When proclaiming ones belief in something during a comment at a meeting, it may be helpful if we also explain how that belief helps us to stay sober and clean.

Lastly, each of us should remember to always respect and honor everyone exactly where they are in their search for sobriety and sanity in life.

**Wayne P.  
West End Men’s Group**



## SOUTH EDMONTON FELLOWSHIP CENTRE JULY FINANCIAL

South Edmonton Fellowship Centre	
Profit and Loss	
July 2022	
	TOTAL
INCOME	
Donation	115.00
Group/Meeting Rent	1,854.90
Uncategorized Income	121.32
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$2,091.22</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$2,091.22</b>
EXPENSES	
Accounting Software	44.00
Condo fees	2,811.20
Telephone	41.29
Utilities	410.07
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,306.56</b>
<b>PROFIT</b>	<b>\$ -1,215.34</b>

## SPECIAL THANKS TO ANONYMOUS DONATOR/S OF THE LECTERN

People in recovery are among the most honest, humble, authentic, and generous people. You may have noticed the lectern which suddenly appeared at the Centre. Thank you to whoever customized it with a plaque for the Centre and dropped it off. This lectern was needed and much appreciated for speaker meetings held at the Centre. Thank you!!!



# August 2022 South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA)</li> <li>8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM ISMs (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)</li> </ul>	<b>4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM Keep it Simple (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM Indo-Canadian Living Sober (AA) Hosted by and catering to those who speak the Indo-Canadian languages (i.e., Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu).</li> </ul>	<b>6</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA)</li> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous</li> <li>7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous</li> </ul>
<b>7</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:00 AM Sunday Morning Survivors (NA) Men Only</li> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>2:00 PM Punjabi Big Book Study</li> </ul>	<b>8</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA)</li> <li>8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>9</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM ISMs (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)</li> </ul>	<b>11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM Keep it Simple (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM Indo-Canadian Living Sober (AA) In Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu</li> </ul>	<b>13</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA)</li> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner</li> <li>2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous</li> <li>7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous</li> </ul>
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<b>28</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:00 AM Sunday Morning Survivors (NA) Men Only</li> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>2:00 PM Punjabi Big Book Study</li> </ul>	<b>29</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA)</li> <li>8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>30</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM ISMs (AA)</li> </ul>	<b>31</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)</li> <li>7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)</li> </ul>			