Fellowship Centre Newsletter: October 2022

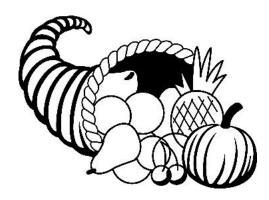


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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Canadians celebrate Thanksgiving the second Monday of October. As the story goes, in 1578, English explorer Martin Frobisher and his crew gave thanks and engaged in Christian practices, either on land at Frobisher Bay, in present day Nunavut, or onboard a ship anchored there. The explorers dined on salt beef, biscuits, and mushy peas and gave thanks for their safe arrival in then Newfoundland. This is now accepted as the first "Canadian" Thanksgiving, 43 years before the first "American" Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is a time for gratitude. In this newsletter you will find suggestions for things to put on your gratitude list. You will also find highlights on the *Keep it Simple* group held at the Centre on Thursday evenings. Additionally, the twenty questions of the Workaholics Anonymous program may help you determine if you qualify. Answers are provided to the identification game presented in the September Newsletter concerning celebrities in recovery, in need of recovery or too late for recovery. Also included is an article by Wayne P. which is a follow up to the article featured in the August Centre Newsletter about staying sober as an agnostic. You may enjoy listening and dancing to the *12-Step Rap* (YouTube link on page 2). More detailed information is provided about the First Anniversary of the Centre to be held on November 27 (please mark the date on your calendar). As always, contributions from members (any recovery program) are welcomed for publication consideration in future newsletters.

Wishing you a happy, clean, and sober Thanksgiving. Editor Julia, Centre Volunteer

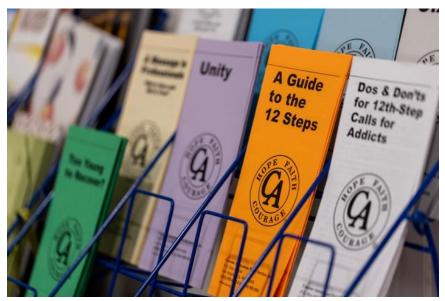
NEW PRIME TIMES AVAILABLE FOR RECOVERY MEETINGS

Special thanks to those groups who changed their meeting times to allow for more recovery meetings to open at the Centre. For all available times, refer to the Events Calendar (page 10 of this Newsletter).

Two prime spots are now available

- 1. Fridays at 8:00 PM
- 2. Sundays at 1:30 PM

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 17 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. The Centre has numerous times throughout each day of the week that are available for additional mutual support recovery meetings. If you are considering opening or moving a mutual support group, please contact the Centre. During the first year, new meetings and groups simply pay whatever they can to the Centre for rent.



Santa Monica Sam wrote a song entitled *The 12 Step Rap*. He dedicated the song to "12 steppers all around the world, as well as those who have gone before us and those who may be on their way!" It is very catchy and provides a good summary of the Steps. "Step One is all about surrender and you may even be a first-time offender, or you might be coming back from a bender but welcome to the club you can still be a member ..."

I think you will like it. Google *The 12 Step Rap*. It is on Spotify as well as YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-jRWOaoZ3k

Answers for "Identify the Celebrity" that appeared in September Newsletter

- 1. Zac Efron
- 2. Amy Winehouse
- 3. Daniel Radcliffe
- 4. Lindsay Lohan
- 5. Shia LaBeouf
- 6. Keith Urban
- 7. Bradley Cooper
- 8. Matthew Perry
- 9. Michael Phelps
- Phelps 10. Janeane Garofalo
- 11. Chris Cornell
- 12. Mel Gibson

THE CENTRE'S ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2022, 4:00-7:00 PM WITH SPEAKERS & POTLUCK DINNER A Minimum Donation of \$10/Person will Ensure the Centre Doors Stay Open

Speaker	Торіс	
Genevieve	The Centre: From Idea to Reality	Unity CE
Wayne	The Centre's First Year and Beyond	A Guide Dos & Don'ts for 12th-Stan
Julia	A Year of Wins and Mishaps at the Centre	12 Steps Calls for Addicts
Trey	Crossover Addiction Recovery at the Centre	9/0
Rick	Sunday Morning Survivors at the Centre	
Bill	The Middle Part of Step 12 at the Centre	
Adrien	Gratitude for and at the Centre	

To contribute a dinner item/s or for more information

email fellowshipcentre@shaw.ca, phone 780.220.7811or talk to Wayne, Julia, Genevieve

Menu Item	Donated by	
Asian Salad	G	
Crook Pot Chilli	W & P	
Potato Salad	J	
Beef Meatballs	H & G	
Cinnamon Buns	A & R	

DECEMBER FUNDRAISER SILENT AUCTION

Items on Display December 1st: Highest Bidder Contacted on December 10th



Monthly rent paid by groups contributes to the operation of the Centre as do generous donations from individuals and families. Nonetheless, fundraising is necessary to raise funds to pay bills and continue to improve the Centre. Valuable donated items will be auctioned in December including this lovely bistro set (on right, bidding starts at \$100), and still-

in-box winch valued at \$450 (on left). If you have valuable items to donate to the Centre, talk to Wayne, call 780-220-7811 and send a



photo of the item to email <u>fellowshipcentre@shaw.ca</u> Approved items can be picked up anytime and will be on display at the Centre in December. Think Christmas gifts and support the Centre.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS: TRADITION TEN

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

Checklist for Tradition Ten from the AA Grapevine

- 1. Do I ever give the impression that there really is an "AA opinion" on Antabuse? Tranquilizers? Doctors? Psychiatrists? Churches? Hospitals? Jails? Alcohol? The federal or state government? Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins? Al-Anon? Alateen?
- 2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those noted above without giving the impression I am stating the "AA opinion"?
- 3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
- 4. Have I had a similar experience in my own AA life?
- 5. What would AA be without this Tradition? Where would I be?
- 6. Do I breach this or any of its supporting Traditions in subtle, perhaps unconscious, ways?
- 7. How can I manifest the spirit of this Tradition in my personal life outside AA? Inside AA? (Reprinted from Service Material from the General Service Office SM F-131)

THE TWELVE PROMISES: PROMISE TEN

"Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us."

As we work the first nine Steps, we prepare ourselves for the adventure of a new life. But when we approach Step Ten "continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it", we commence to put our A.A. way of living to practical use, day by day, in fair weather or foul. Then comes the acid test: can we stay sober, keep in emotional balance, and live to good purpose under all conditions? (Alcoholics Anonymous p. 88) Promise 10 will be realised by the time we complete Step 10.

Certainly, fear of people will leave us when we make restitution to those who we have harmed, and we continue to take responsibility for our actions as we go along. What about fear of economic insecurity? If we have made arrangements with our creditors to pay them back and we continue to pay our bills on an ongoing basis, our fear of economic insecurity will have improved. The promise does not say that we will be economically secure, only that the fear of economic insecurity will leave us. The fear will leave us when we face head on our economic responsibilities and do our best to negotiate a solution with our creditors.

This reminds me of a story from the Big Book about a man who owed alimony to his first wife. "A man we know had remarried. Because of resentment and drinking, he had not paid alimony to his first wife. She was furious. She went to court and got a warrant for his arrest." (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 79) If this man was in jail, he could have provided nothing to either family. This man had sobered up and obtained a job. He wrote a letter to his first wife to make arrangements to pay her as much alimony as he was able. She accepted his proposal and with time the matter was resolved. The key point is that because of staying sober, holding a job and taking responsibility for his financial obligations, his fear of economic insecurity had been removed, though his economic security may have still been shaky given that he had financial obligations while he was just getting his life back together.

SPOTLIGHT ON A MEETING HELD AT THE CENTRE

Hello and my name is Julia J. I am a member of the *Keep it Simple Group* of Alcoholics Anonymous that meets at the Fellowship Centre Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm. The image to the right shows that the simplest path between two lines is a straight line. So, why take the circuitous route from A to B shown

in the image? "I make a conscious effort to keep it simple, because the simpler I make it, the happier I become." (Grapevine daily quote from Voices of Long-Term Sobriety)

The *Keep it Simple Group* started as a closed meeting in January 2022 organised by an AA member whose new work schedule made it necessary for him to leave the Group. At that time the meeting was a topics meeting and its format



included reading of the Preamble, How it Works and 12 Traditions. The topic was chosen from the reading of the Daily Reflections for the day. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

By May 2022, the *Keep it Simple* meeting format changed significantly, and it was decided by the then two homegroup members to change the meeting to a Big Book study. The format now includes reading of the Preamble, but not of How it Works and12 Traditions. Instead, we read a few pages of the Big Book. Attendees read, one after another, a paragraph or two of a selected section. We are making our way through the Big Book from beginning to end, a few pages every meeting. After the reading is complete, discussion begins. The meeting chairperson advises participants to confine their comments to the pages just read or on their experiences with alcoholism. The meeting closes with the Responsibility Pledge. The purpose of the meeting is to carry the message in the text of Alcoholics Anonymous. Ours' is a meeting about solutions! We focus on a common solution that holds us together, that of working the Steps as laid out in our basic text, the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

It was decided to make the meeting a group and soon two more members joined. Our job as a group continues to be to provide people with a place to learn about and work the Steps. It has been our experience that working the Steps consistently provides us with a better sober life. Attendance at meetings has increased over the months to about 9 individuals per meeting. If you would like to make the *Keep it Simple* Group your home group, we would be happy to sign you up.

Yours in gratitude and service, Julia J.



"Do you ever stop and think how lucky we are to be alive?"

"What if, when you woke up tomorrow, you had only those things you had remembered to be grateful for today?" (anonymous)

SPIRITUAL AGNOSTIC

My last drink was on Boxing Day, 1980 and my first meeting a couple of days later at the Alano Club in North Vancouver. At the time I considered myself to be a happy and content agnostic. Not a confirmed Atheist, I just didn't care enough to debate whether there was a God or not. What I did know was that I was desperate to get sober and to quit hurting those that were close to me. I hoped beyond hope that AA might provide a solution to help me escape the insane circle of blackout drinking, outrageous behavior, and the overwhelming guilt and despair that always seemed to follow.

The first AA speaker I heard, opened the meeting with words similar to these: "If you are new to AA and you're wondering if you are an alcoholic, I've got bad news for you. Normal people (the non-alcoholics of the world) never end up at AA meetings with those kinds of thoughts. Odds are, you probably are an alcoholic. There is some good news here though: *You are in the right place*. We can show you a way to live that will get that monkey off your back, a way to stay sober on a daily basis, a way to become and stay the person you always wanted to be."

I was hooked. There was hope here. Hope that I might be able to change. That I might become a person who handles his responsibilities and can be counted on by those he loves. I remember purchasing a Big Book at that first meeting and leaving slightly exhilarated, wanting to know more; but also scared that it might not work for me. After all, that *God word* was heard numerous times during their Readings, and I tended to turn off when I felt someone was trying to convert me to their religious beliefs. But behind the speaker's podium at that meeting hung this large poster listing the 12 Traditions of AA. I remember my gaze being stuck on the third item down the list: *The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking*. Yea, there was hope here. Maybe I too could learn how to stay sober.

So, for the next few months I routinely attended AA meetings, pretty much every day finding one in Vancouver's lower mainland. Eventually, I nervously asked that first speaker from my first meeting to be my sponsor, and with great relief I heard him say "Yes".

Mel G. was his name, and eventually Mel guided me through my first Step series, advising me on critical issues that I struggled with. Learning patience and tolerance of others, particularly when their views didn't align with my own thinking, was learned from Mel. He was quick to point out how my sometimes-narcissistic thinking would most likely get me back drinking if it wasn't addressed.

Wow, what a learning experience. Can't say I liked everything I discovered about myself, but over time and much to my surprise, I started to be aware that things weren't bothering me like they had before. That maybe I was getting a bit thicker skinned. That maybe some humility was finally creeping into my way of thinking.

It's interesting how the incessant craving to drink will disappear so quickly once you start going to meetings, but then suddenly reappears later on when you get caught up in the ups and downs of life. It was paradoxical to me the way I only longed for a drink when something wasn't going well, or conversely when things were going so well that I felt I needed a drink to celebrate.

Lucky for me, my sponsor Mel recognized what was going on with me and had the solution. He felt I spent too much time looking at my naval. That I needed to get out of myself. Mel suggested (in the manner that only sponsors do, which you know is not really a suggestion) that I should start doing service work to help others stay sober.

Thus started a journey that's taken me through most of the levels of service within the AA service structure. Along the way I've met and learned from many of the best in AA, all who seemed to subscribe to that same not-so-secret school of thought: service work and helping the still suffering alcoholic is the easier, softer way to stay happy and sober.

Looking back at my AA journey, the first decade or so seemed focused on my own personal growth and what I needed to do to stay sober. Practicing the principles learned from 12 Step study groups in which I participated played a huge part in that, it gave me a foundation to build on in future years where I was able to continue growing with others in the service-oriented side of AA.

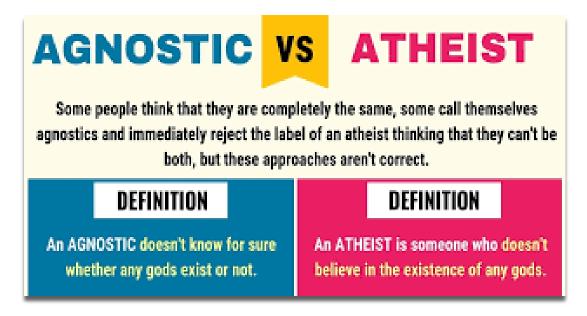
Studying the AA pamphlets and the 12 Traditions has helped me tremendously in working with others in the AA community. An example of this comes when suggesting a solution to a Group problem. It's been my experience that when based on the readings from AA literature, a suggestion seems to work out to the satisfaction of most everyone. But pushing my own agenda which hasn't withstood the scrutiny of the Group Conscience has rarely worked, even when I may have been right.

I'm retired today, which allows me to do service work on almost a daily basis. I'm a member of a team which builds and maintains software for AA, Al-anon, and other recovery organizations. Participating with others in service to carry the hope-filled recovery messages of these 12 Step recovery programs to those still in need is just as important now as it was when I first looked for a way out of my alcoholic predicament.

Being sober and able to make a positive contribution to the world we live in is a gift. Gone are the days of guilt and remorse. Just days of waking up wondering what challenges will come my way. Whatever it is, I know I'll have my AA support system to help me deal with it.

What became of that agnostic that came into the program of AA more than four decades ago? I now think of myself as a happy and content spiritual agnostic who has a toolkit of principles which help guide me in life, something that I was sorely missing before.

Thank you all for the gift of my sobriety for which I am forever grateful. Wayne P. West End Men's Group



THINGS TO PUT ON YOUR GRATITUDE LIST

- You are sober
- You woke up without a hangover
- You are in good health
- You look good and healthy
- You have a supportive family
- You have a loyal sober network of friends
- You are a better friend and family member
- You have 12-step meetings, counselors, sponsors, and support groups to help you
- You have freedom you are not trapped, emotionally or physically, by anxiety or behind bars
- You have career opportunities and the ability to work
- You have a growing bank account
- You have the potential to make a difference in the lives of others
- You can accomplish your goals without being held back by a substance or an activity addiction

WORD SEARCH (answers in next Newsletter)

O I R O I O P O D M D Z B N N W N G H I E E E D L T A I T N A N P T P R O O S T E I R R R A E I O X U H R L M E E B N N D I B D V E A C S O D K S C S R E S C O S L E I T A T A N N I V A I N N R T A W T U S E N Z C G E I N E I O T R T E E A A O C L O C E Y B E E R M N E Y N K A S W I N E Beer
Bloodstream
Dependence
Depressant
Drinking
Intervention
Intoxication
Metabolize
Pharmacist
Recovery
Substance
Wine

ARE YOU A WORKAHOLIC?

- 1. Are you more drawn to your work or activity than close relationships, rest, etc.?
- 2. Are there times when you are motivated and push through tasks when you don't even want to and other times when you procrastinate and avoid them when you would prefer to get things done?
- 3. Do you take work with you to bed? On weekends? On vacation?
- 4. Are you more comfortable talking about your work than other topics?
- 5. Do you pull all-nighters?
- 6. Do you resent your work or the people at your workplace for imposing so many pressures on you?
- 7. Do you avoid intimacy with others and/or yourself?
- 8. Do you resist rest when tired and use stimulants to stay awake longer?
- 9. Do you take on extra work or volunteer commitments because you are concerned that things won't otherwise get done?
- 10. Do you regularly underestimate how long something will take and then rush to complete it?
- 11. Do you immerse yourself in activities to change how you feel or avoid grief, anxiety, and shame?
- 12. Do you get impatient with people who have other priorities besides work?
- 13. Are you afraid that if you don't work hard all the time, you will lose your job or be a failure?
- 14. Do you fear success, failure, criticism, burnout, financial insecurity, or not having enough time?
- 15. Do you try to multitask to get more done?
- 16. Do you get irritated when people ask you to stop doing what you're doing in order to do something else?
- 17. Have your long hours caused injury to your health or relationships?
- 18. Do you think about work or other tasks while driving, conversing, or falling asleep?
- 19. Do you feel agitated when you are idle and/or hopeless that you'll ever find balance?
- 20. Do you feel like a slave to your email, texts, or other technology?

If you answered "yes" to three or more of these questions, you may be a workaholic. Relax. You are not alone. Many have found recovery through the W.A. Fellowship. https://workaholics-anonymous.org/newcomers



OCTOBER 2022 South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
10:00 AM Sunday Morning Survivors (NA) Men Only 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner	 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) 	12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	5 • 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	6 • 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	7 • 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner
(AA)	8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)	• 7:00 PM ISMs (AA)	7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)	7:00 PM Keep it Simple (AA)	6:30 PM Indo-Canadian Living Sober (AA) In Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu	2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
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