

Fellowship Centre Newsletter: November 2022



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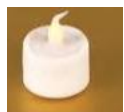
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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

November 11th is Remembrance Day 2022 in Canada. On Remembrance Day, we acknowledge those who served their country, and we acknowledge our responsibility to work for the peace they fought to achieve. In this issue of the newsletter, we consider Alcoholics Anonymous in war time with various quotes from the Big Book concerning war. Details of two exciting upcoming events are provided in the next two pages: 1) the Centre's one year anniversary speakers and potluck dinner on November 27th and 2) a silent auction in early December. In the following pages, you will find interesting and helpful articles on stinking thinking, the benefits of mutual support groups, and the importance of physical activity in recovery. You will also find a preview of an event, a potluck dinner, that will take place in December at the centre. More details will be provided in next month's newsletter. If you have ideas on how to improve the newsletter or would like to submit an article, please email me at editor@fellowship-centre.org



There is a new Narcotics Anonymous meeting, First Response to Recovery, held at the Centre on Friday evenings at 8 o'clock. Also, LED tea lights are now available at the Centre for meetings that would like to use them. They are in a plastic box by the pamphlets.

The Electronic Recycling Association (ERA) is a non-profit organization specializing in electronics recycling. ERA will soon provide the Centre with much needed computer equipment at minimal cost. If you have electronics that you would like to recycle, please consider donating to this wonderful organization <https://www.era.ca>



Yours in service, Julia J.

BILL W. USES PEARL HARBOR AS AN ANALOGY

Excerpt from a Lecture given at the Yale School of Alcohol Studies (June 1945)

My first task is a joyous one; it is to voice the sincere gratitude that every member of Alcoholics Anonymous present feels tonight as we can stand in the midst of this assembly. I know that in this assembly there are many different points of view, that we have social workers, ministers, doctors and others, people we once thought did not understand us, because we did not understand them.

I think right away of one of our clergyman friends. He helped start our group in St. Louis, and when Pearl Harbor came, he thought to himself, "Well this will be a hard day for the A.A.'s." He expected to see us go off like firecrackers. Well, nothing much happened, and the good man was rather joyously disappointed, you might say. But he was puzzled. And then he noticed with still more wonder that the A.A.s seemed rather less excited about Pearl Harbor than the normal people. In fact, quite a number of the so-called normal people seemed to be getting drunk and very distressed. So, he went up to one of the A.A.'s and said, "Tell me, how is it that you folks hold up so well under this stress, I mean this Pearl Harbor?"

The A.A. looked at him, smiled, and said, "You know, each of us has had his own private Pearl Harbor, each of us has known the utmost of humiliation, despair, and defeat. So why should we, who have known the resurrection, fear another Pearl Harbor?" (For the full lecture, see Silkworth.net)

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

For more information call 780-220-7811 or email info@fellowship-centre.org

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES AND TALKS

- 4:00 Fellowship and Dinner Set Up
- 4:30 The Centre: From Idea to Reality (Genevieve)
- 4:45 The Centre's First Year and Beyond (Wayne)
- 5:00 A Year of Wins and Mishaps at the Centre (Julia)
- 5:15 Potluck Buffet Dinner and Fellowship
- 6:00 Crossover Addiction Recovery at the Centre (Trey)
- 6:10 Sunday Morning Survivors at the Centre (Rick)
- 6:20 The Middle Part of Step 12 at the Centre (Bill)
- 6:30 Gratitude for/at the Centre (Adrien)
- 6:40 Wayne, Final Remarks
- 6:45 Fellowship and Last Chance Buffet
- 7:00 Centre Clean Up



DONATED POTLUCK DINNER ITEMS: MUCH MORE NEEDED

Menu Item	Donated By
Asian Salad	GJ
Beet Pickles	
Crock Pot Chilli	W & P
Potato Salad	JJ
Pork Sirloin Kebabs	
Beef Meatballs	H & G
Cinnamon Buns	A & R
2 Buckets of KFC	AH
Mexican Corn Salad	RF
Garlic Potatoes, Gravy Roast Beef	FB



Please consider donating a menu item for the potluck dinner. There is a menu donation sign-up sheet on the bulletin board at the Centre. Or call 780-220-7811 or email info@fellowship-centre.org

DECEMBER 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. Fundraising is necessary to pay bills and continue to improve the Centre. The following valuable donated items will be auctioned in early December. After December 1st, place your bid on the paper beside the item.

NEW WINCH (valued at \$430)



BISTRO SET (owner paid \$1700)



HAND-CRAFTED IN ITALY FIGURINE (priceless)



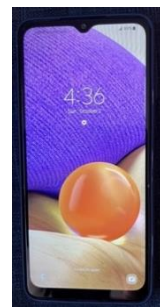
DOUBLE HAMMOCK (valued at \$300)



CLOTHESLINE (valued at \$100)



GALAXY PHONE (valued at \$290)



LIKE NEW ACOUSTIC GUITAR (valued at \$250)



The items pictured have all been donated in support of this fundraiser. The Centre has several fundraising activities throughout the year. Fundraising is essential to ensure that the Centre can pay its bills and continue to offer a safe, welcoming, and affordable environment for mutual support recovery meetings and groups. Please consider donating items of no less than \$100 to this fundraiser.

For more information or to donate, call 780-220-7811 or email info@fellowship-centre.org

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN 12 STEP RECOVERY: STEP 11

The Traditional Step 11

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.

Traditional Interpretation of Step 11

For many in recovery, the concept of spirituality can be unfamiliar, lost, or rejected. Those who have had an upbringing in a specific faith may find their experience was more religious than spiritual. Most who are sincere in working the 12 Steps, by the time they reach Step 11, have discovered a measure of spirituality at work in your life. The approaches and methods of prayer and meditation suggested in Step 11 vary, but the purpose of the Step is to connect with your higher power. Many in 12 Step recovery say that through the Steps, they discovered their higher power and formed a better understanding of that power. Some prefer to call the higher power "God," others avoid the word altogether. The point is for members to discover through participation in the program that there is a power greater than themselves, and they have seen that power at work.

Traditional Step 11 Recommended Actions

1. Choose the type of spiritual, meditative, or meaningful practice you would like to incorporate into your life.
2. Focus on your objective to bring spirituality, faith, or meaning to your life. Sometimes this might involve a higher power, but it can also involve a focus on your higher self.
3. Find ways to explore your meaningful practice. Create an environment that is relaxing, peaceful, and free of distractions.
4. Work on letting go of your existing beliefs about yourself that might be holding you back from making changes in your life. Your goal is to allow the higher power you believe in to guide you on your path to recovery.

The Modern Step 11

Pursued a program of ongoing self-improvement and empowerment through meditation, reflection, and study.

Modern Interpretation of Step 11

Long-term success with your recovery is dependent on continuous improvement of your recovery skills and enhancing your ability to be self-directed. This includes reinforcement and refinement of your understanding of the 12 Step principles and seeking additional information from other recovery resources (medical, psychological, and spiritual). As Step 11 suggests, there are several ways to approach this ongoing improvement and empowerment including meditation, reflection, and further study.

Modern Step 11 Recommended Actions

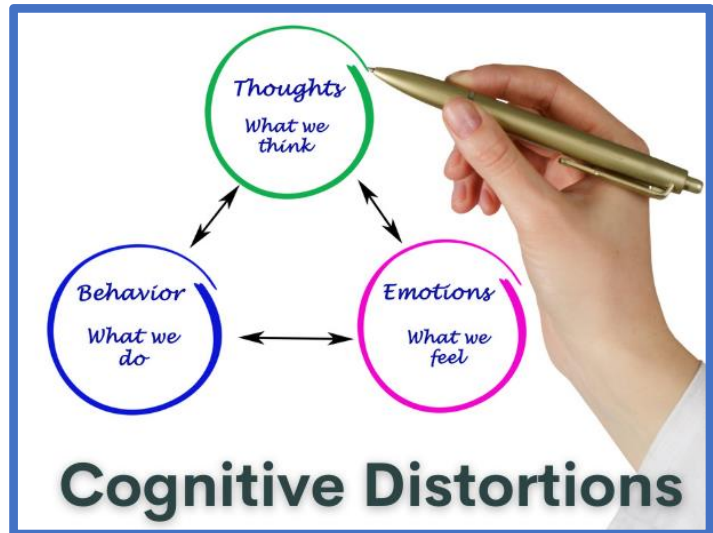
1. Meet with your sponsor and complete a review of Steps 1 through 10, focussing on what has been learned to date.
2. Ask your sponsor and several friends in recovery about books, articles, and podcasts that they would recommend to support your continued personal development.
3. Take a class on meditation, one that provides a background in several meditation techniques.

STINKING THINKING BEFORE AND AFTER RECOVERY

“We know that while the alcoholic [addict] keeps away from drink [drug, activity], as he may do for months or years, he reacts much like other men. We are equally positive that once he takes any alcohol [drug] whatever into his system [or acts out], something happens, both in the bodily and mental sense, which makes it virtually impossible for him to stop. The experience of any alcoholic [addict] will abundantly confirm this. These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink [drug or acted out], thereby setting the terrible cycle in motion. *Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic [addict] centers in his mind, rather than in his body.*”

(From the Big Book, in the Chapter, *There is a Solution*)

There are 10 thinking errors called cognitive distortions (stinking thinking) that are commonly used by people to interpret events. These distortions are frequently present in people suffering from addiction, depression, and other thinking-based disorders. The results of this disordered thinking are unhealthy emotions and responses to events. Through self-evaluation, carefully consider if any of the following cognitive distortions describe some of your stinking thinking. The following can become routine in a person suffering from addiction:



Cognitive distortions, also known as Stinking Thinking

1. **All or nothing thinking** – thinking in extremes; no room for gray areas.
2. **Overgeneralization** – based on a single occurrence, you conclude that something will continue to occur.
3. **Mental filtering** – focussing only on the negative aspects of things and ignoring the positive.
4. **Disqualifying the positive** – discounting positive experiences. They do not count for one reason or another.
5. **Mind reading/fortune telling** – jumping to the conclusion that the outcome will be negative without supporting facts.
6. **Catastrophizing (magnification)** – dwelling on the worst-case occurring because of a single event.
7. **Emotional reasoning** – believing that if you feel this way, it must be true.
8. **Shoulds** – self-defeating attempts to motivate ourselves and others with unreal expectations, only to ultimately feel a sense of failure when these expectations are not met.
9. **Labelling** – extreme generalization. “I am a loser” rather than “I made a mistake.”
10. **Personalization and blame** – blaming yourself or others for situations over which you have no control.

Strategies for changing stinking thinking will appear in the Centre’s December Newsletter.

THE BENEFITS OF MUTUAL SUPPORT RECOVERY

Life in Recovery from Addiction in Canada reports on a 2017 survey of Canadians in recovery by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. On page 2 of the report, it states: *The most common recovery resources or programs used were 12-step mutual support groups (91.8%).*

<<https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2019-04/CCSA-Life-in-Recovery-from-Addiction-Report-2017-en.pdf>>

There are tens of thousands of mutual support recovery meetings around the world (123,000 registered AA groups and 35,500 weekly NA meetings). By participating in a mutual support recovery network, you are rewarded with significant benefits. It is an environment that facilitates learning the 12 Steps and promotes your personal growth and development.



Below are some of the many benefits of regularly attending mutual support recovery meetings:

Early Recovery Support

The meetings and other activities are welcoming, provide a safe place to go, and reduce the loneliness often accompanying addiction.

An Atmosphere of Change

Participating in a nonjudgmental, friendly environment, where you can talk openly, helps to reduce stress, and builds a sense of empowerment.

A Vision of Hope

Being around people who are experiencing successful recovery and enjoying a new quality of life is motivating and provides a vision for your recovery.

Connections

The willingness of people to give you their contact information provides an understanding, responsive system of support outside of the meetings.

Improved Social Life

Many people make friends with other mutual support meeting participants and engage in social activities together.

Sources of Recovery Resources

Mutual support group participants are excellent sources for literature, activities, supporting therapies, and other resources to use in your recovery.

Free of Charge

The mutual support structure, facilitated by knowledgeable non-professionals, is free of charge; donate whatever you can when you can.

So why not step up your mutual support activities to realize all of these benefits! Next month, the Fellowship Breakfast Group that meets at the centre Saturdays will be hosting a potluck dinner on Sunday to which you all are invited.

SPOTLIGHT ON A MEETING HELD AT THE CENTRE

ISM's (AA) TUESDAY AT 7:00 PM

Expansions of acronym "ISM" include

- I Separate Myself,
- I Sponsor Myself,
- I sabotage myself,
- I Self Me.
- Inner Spiritual Melody

The ISMs meeting opened at the Centre on January 4th of 2022. The meeting held on Tuesday evenings provides a place for people to talk about their multiple addictions in a safe and supportive environment. Reading from "The Language of Letting Go: Daily Meditations on Codependency" serves to focus ISMs meeting discussion. One of our attendees states "ISM's for me is about my physical and emotional sobriety. I feel that any substance I use, not to feel my feelings, arrests my spiritual growth."

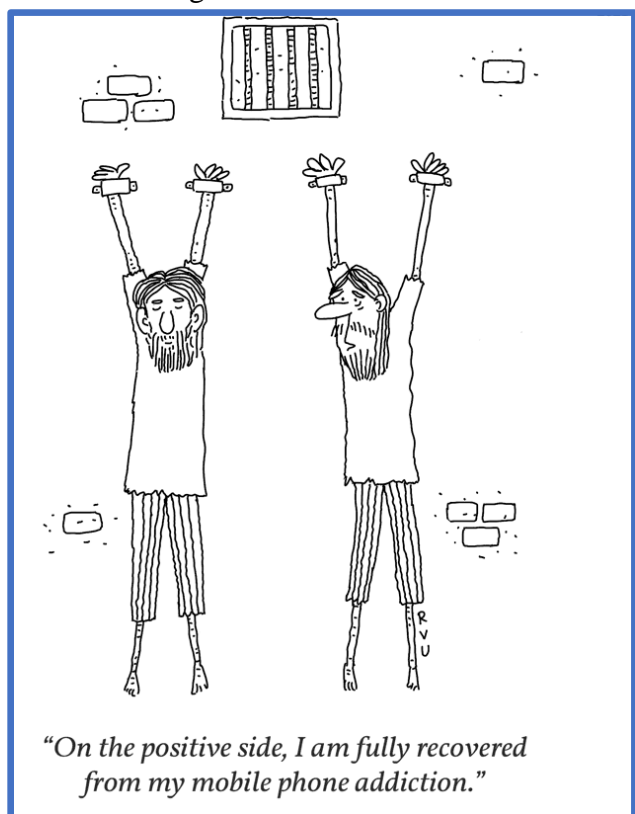
An illness tends to occur in one person along with one or more other illnesses. For example, a person diagnosed with social anxiety disorder is often also diagnosed with major depressive disorder. This seems to be equally true of addiction. A person who is an alcoholic can also be a compulsive gambler. It has been suggested that addiction is a personality type that will show itself depending on the circumstances and availability of different activities or substances.

Those with a single addiction, not necessarily alcoholism, are welcome to attend and share at the ISMs meeting. Many ISMs meeting regular attendees share only on their alcoholism, others only about drug addiction. Everyone who attends is united by some substance (drugs, alcohol) and/or some activity (gambling, pornography) that is interfering with them being the best possible version of themselves.

A regular attendee reports enjoying abstinence from tobacco, weed and alcohol. Another regular attendee is grappling with coffee overuse (as well as alcoholism, relationship addiction and drug addiction) and has achieved ten months sobriety from coffee before going to

95% dark chocolate instead. Another is a compulsive gambler, food addict, alcoholic, drug addict, and codependent. This person identifies as all of these before beginning to share at the meetings. Another speaks of "big shot ism" as the term is used in Step 10 of the 12&12. This member goes on to share that as insurance against "big shot ism" one must remember that it is not you who gave yourself these gifts but rather your higher power. Remembering this has a humbling effect and also makes the lows down the road less devastating.

The term ISMs is being used more these days. For example, the term has found its way into OA meetings where a member shares about controlling his/her ISMs which include overeating as well as other controlling and obsessive behaviors.



Rajeshvu.com 2021

It would be wonderful to see you at the Centre on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM where you will receive support for recovering from a single or several addictions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN RECOVERY

The weakest and oldest among us can become some kind of athlete, but only the strongest can survive as spectators. Only the hardest can survive the perils of inertia, inactivity, and immobility.

Dr. John Bland, Rheumatologist

There is growing evidence that exercise can be a powerful tool in your recovery. Experts think regular physical activity can act as a healthy stand-in for addictive substances and activities. That is because exercise and drugs of misuse, work on similar parts of the brain. They both activate the reward pathway, which triggers the release of feel-good chemicals like serotonin and dopamine.

Studies have shown that physical activity can:

Ease withdrawal. Regular exercise can lessen anxiety, depression, and stress. These are common symptoms you might get during recovery that can lead to relapse.

Curb cravings. You can get a strong urge to use drugs/alcohol or act out when you try to avoid cravings. Exercise can distract you from cravings or make them less powerful.

Replace your triggers. An exercise routine gives you something to do and builds your social network. This can help you avoid people, places, or things that remind you of your substance or activity of choice.

Help you think clearly. Regular physical activity can help your mind work better. Your odds of relapse might go down when your thoughts are more stable (avoid stinking thinking).

Improve your sleep. Insomnia sometimes occurs when you try to avoid drugs, alcohol and acting out. Regular exercise helps people fall asleep faster and get better quality rest at night.

Boost your self-esteem and self-control. The effects of physical exercise on mind and body, makes you feel better about yourself. When you feel good about yourself, it is easier to manage stress and maintain self-control. Your improved strength and demeanor can prevent people who might otherwise mistreat you from doing so, making you feel better about yourself and further increasing your self-esteem.

Exercises That Can Help

Early research shows aerobic exercise and resistance training might help with addiction recovery. But right now, there is not enough evidence to say that one kind of physical activity is better than another. Future studies should help us learn more. Two categories of exercise that are useful in recovery and for general health and wellbeing are: cardio (work the heart) and strength (work the muscles).

Aerobic, or cardio, exercises get your heart rate up for a sustained period. That includes:

Walking	Swimming	Hiking	Dancing
Running	Boxing	Light gardening	Water aerobics

Resistance, or strength-training exercises work your muscles. Examples include:

Some kinds of yoga	Squats or lunges
Weightlifting	Heavy gardening,
Push-ups or sit-ups	such as digging

How Much Should You Exercise?

Experts do not know what “dose” is the most helpful. Until more is known, you can aim for the same amount of physical activity as everyone else. That is, at least 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of intense cardio exercise every week. Add strength-training twice a week.



LEST WE FORGET: QUOTES CONCERNING WAR

“Post-war disillusionment, ever more serious alcoholism, impending mental and physical collapse, brought him to the point of self-destruction.” **Big Book, *We Agnostics*, p. 56**

“But the more we fought and tried to have our own way, the worse matters got. As in war, the victor only seemed to win. Our moments of triumph were short-lived.” **Big Book, *How It Works*, p. 66**

“We had to drink because our nation had won a war or lost a peace.” **12 & 12, *Step Four*, p. 47**

“When World War II broke out, this spiritual principle had its first major test. A.A.'s entered the services and were scattered all over the world. Would they be able to take discipline, stand up under fire, and endure the monotony and misery of war? Would the kind of dependence they had learned in A.A. carry them through? Well, it did. They had even fewer alcoholic lapses or emotional binges than A.A.'s safe at home did. They were just as capable of endurance and valor as any other soldiers. Whether in Alaska or on the Salerno beachhead, their dependence upon a Higher Power worked. And far from being a weakness, this dependence was their chief source of strength.” **12 & 12, *Step Three*, p. 38**

War fever ran high in the New England town to which we new, young officers from Plattsburg were assigned, and we were flattered when the first citizens took us to their homes, making us feel heroic. Here was love, applause, war; moments sublime with intervals hilarious. I was part of life at last, and in the midst of the excitement I discovered liquor. I forgot the strong warnings and the prejudices of my people concerning drink. In time we sailed for "Over There." I was very lonely and again turned to alcohol. We landed in England. I visited Winchester Cathedral. Much moved, I wandered outside. My attention was caught by a doggerel on an old tombstone:



“Here lies a Hampshire Grenadier
Who caught his death
Drinking cold small beer.
A good soldier is ne'er forgot
Whether he dieth by musket
Or by pot.”



Ominous warning - which I failed to heed. Twenty-two, and a veteran of foreign wars, I went home at last. I fancied myself a leader, for had not the men of my battery given me a special token of appreciation? My talent for leadership, I imagined, would place me at the head of vast enterprises which I would manage with the utmost assurance.

Big Book, *Bill's Story*, p. 1

“Life is exponentially better than it ever was before. I’m living out the life I used to fantasize about, and I have a whole lot of work still in front of me. I have hope to share and love to give, and I just keep going one day at a time, living this adventure called life.”

The Big Book, The Missing Link, page 288

November 2022 South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM Keep it Simple (AA) 	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Indo-Canadian Living Sober (AA Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu) 8:00 PM First Response to Recovery (NA) 	5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Survivors (NA) Men Only 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 	7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA) 	8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM Keep it Simple (AA) 	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Indo-Canadian Living Sober (AA Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu) 8:00 PM First Response to Recovery (NA) 	12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner 2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
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27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Survivors 12:00 AA Nooner ANNIVERSARY DINNER 4:00 	28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA) 	29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 			