Fellowship Centre Newsletter: April 2023



9122 34A Avenue NW, Edmonton, T6E 5P4

Telephone: 780-220-7811

Email: info@fellowship-centre.org

Website: https://fellowship-centre.org

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR



Easter traditions and symbols have evolved over time, though some have been around for centuries. While to Christians. Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Christ, many Easter traditions are not found in the Bible. The most prominent symbol of the Christian the Easter bunny, reportedly introduced to America by the German immigrants who brought over stories of an egg-laying rabbit. The decoration of eggs is believed to date back to at least the 13th century, while the rite of the Easter parade has even

older roots. Other traditions, such as the consumption of Easter candy, are among the modern additions to the celebration of this early springtime holiday (https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/easter-symbols).

From a Christian perspective, the last supper before the crucifixion of Christ was the day before Good Friday, which this year would fall on April 6. The South Edmonton Fellowship Centre actually has a first supper this year on April 6th! On Thursday April 6th, the 6:00 PM weekly AA supper meeting, *Dinner with Bill*, will open at the Centre. A light supper will be provided as Bill's writings are read and discussed. All are welcome every Thursday at 6:00 PM.



Items have accumulated at the Centre that people appear to have left behind by mistake. Please check the lost and found box from which you may retrieve the things you have left behind. It is close to the front door.



Promise Four









While the events and circumstances that take place on any one day may be hectic and chaotic, the peace this promise speaks of has more to do with a person's inner state of being than his or her outward circumstances.

The temporary state of calm and contentment that alcohol produces comes at a high cost. With each drink, alcohol's overall effect weakens brain functioning, and in the process turns a normal functioning brain into an alcohol dependent environment, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

By the time alcoholism takes hold, these fleeting states of calm and contentment get harder and harder to come by as the brain can no longer respond to alcohol's effects like it once did. In effect, alcoholism leaves you in a state of chaos and inner turmoil.

Breaking free from the addiction mindset will give you a sense of inner peace.

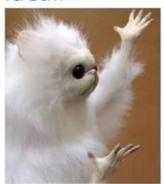
Reprinted from https://www.12step.com/articles/aa-promise-4-you-will-know-peace

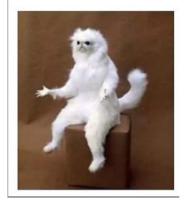
The AA Promises are found on pages 83-84 of the Big Book. The promises are not numbered in the Big Book. In some presentations of the promises, promise 1 is "We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness", and promise 3 is "We will comprehend the word serenity" and 4 is "We will know peace". However, in other presentations, promise 1 is "If we are painstaking about this phase or our development..." and promises 3 and 4 of the former presentations are merged as one. We have taken promise four to be "We will know peace".



SEFC is always looking for members to share their experiences by submitting articles for publication in SEFC issues. If you would like to write a short article about your experience with a Step, Tradition, meeting or recovery event, email your contribution to the editor at editor@fellowshipcentre.org. It is a great opportunity for doing service from your home! Newcomers and Long-timers alike are welcome to participate. We look forward to hearing from you.

When you've worked the twelve steps and you're still less than ideal.

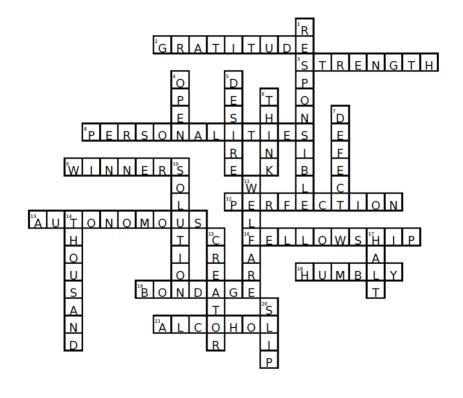




How many Al-Anons does it take to screw in a lightbulb?

None. They just detach and let the light bulb screw itself.

Answers to March's Newsletter Crossword Puzzle









Chinese Big Book



Hebrew Big Book



Bulgarian Big Book



Arabic Big Book

A circus ringleader and his wife were living with their main act, an alcoholic chimpanzee:

The chimpanzee would always do the same thing every day: find the liquor cabinet, drink a few bottles, screech and destroy things for a few hours, and then pass out in a random spot for the rest of the day.

The wife could not stand the chimp, but the ringmaster did not have enough money to find a home for the chimpanzee, or the courage to take him along to his AA meetings. So they do their best to limit the chimpanzee's drinking.

One day, the wife tells the ringmaster, "You need to get rid of that chimp. It's making me go crazy!" The ringmaster, of course, does not want this, so the wife goes, "Well then, tell me what you will do. I'll be in my room"

As the wife is heading to her room, the ringmaster sees the chimpanzee grab a bottle of vodka from the liquor cabinet. He walks towards the chimpanzee while pointing at it and says, "Hey! Put it down!"



Cartoon by Ann Kroger. Ann's AA cartoons can be found on her blog at https://annkroger.com/

Is your program powered by Will Power or by Higher Power?

Most drug addicts drank.

So the best direction to a new person in recovery might be...

What was the main thing, drugs or alcohol?

The answer to that may be helpful in choosing the fellowship that can best help you. Something else to think about - can you honestly tell your story in AA without having to be dishonest because drugs were so prominent?

by Bruce Boyle Friends of Bill and Bob

https://www.facebook.com/groups/2247449301/permalink/10159544864869302/

When your hut's on fire...

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him. Every day he scanned



the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming. Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect him from the elements, and to store his few possessions. One day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, with smoke rolling up to the sky. He felt the worst had happened, and everything was lost. He was stunned with disbelief, grief, and anger. He cried out, "God! How could you do this to me?" Early the next day, he was awakened by the sound of a ship approaching the island! It had come to rescue him! "How did you know I was here?" asked the weary man of his rescuers. "We saw your smoke signal," they replied.

The Moral of This Story:

It's easy to get discouraged when things are going bad, but we shouldn't lose heart, because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of our pain and suffering. Remember that the next time your little hut seems to be burning to the ground. It just may be a smoke signal that summons the Grace of God.

A WORD SEARCH

Words can be up, down, across or diagonal. Have fun and win a few minutes of sobriety!

AACCEPTANTOLOAST COURA GNY ECOVEI SA TI ACHONEST R S R A R S E CCSCGNCCU N E D N E P S SE CE ENTORYKUNGSA

Find the following words in the puzzle above:

Acceptance Happiness Obsession Courage Honesty Pain Humility Dependence Peace Faith Identify Serenity Fear Inventory Service Gratitude Tolerance Seek

POPULAR GOSSIP (from Walk in Dry Places)

The newsstands are full of publications that seem to delight in exposing the sins and foibles of celebrities and prominent officials. Think of the excitement that's been generated just over the sexual misadventures of important people running for public office. While some of these disclosures may be true, we don't help ourselves by reveling in them or reading them. We may even harm ourselves if we get secret enjoyment over the fall of a celebrity. It's never beneficial to find ourselves thinking, "It serves him right!" Reading about private affairs, even in the daily newspapers, is a form of gossip. We can use our time in better ways if we wish to embrace our sobriety. If this sounds a little too stringent, we should remind ourselves that growth in sobriety calls for better management of our thinking and attitudes. Nobody ever got drunk or high simply because he or she read gossipy tabloids. But neither did that person make progress over the general problem of gossip.

I'll have no interest in the weaknesses or shortcomings of those who might be in the news. Popular gossip can be just as harmful as personal gossip.

THE SAGA OF VIRTUTE THE CAT: CANADIANA, FOLK PUNK

October 21, 2016, marked the ending of a Canadian saga when a cat named Virtute died. The saga begins with the release of a song entitled "Plea from a Cat Named Virtute" by the Weakerthans. This song will make you cry at the plight of a cat trying to cheer up her depressed and addicted owner.

The Weakerthans were a Canadian folk punk/indie-rock act from Winnipeg, Manitoba. Their first CD "Reconstruction Site" had creepy artwork on the cover. A track of this CD "Plea from a Cat Named Virtute" begins our Canadian dark and painful saga that ultimately ends in Virtute leaving home because her owner is addicted and does not look after her. The song begins with the following lyrics from the perspective of the cat:

Why don't you ever want to play?
I'm tired of this piece of string
You sleep as much as I do now
And you don't eat much of anything
I don't know who you're talking to
I made a search through every room
But all I found was dust that moved
In shadows of the afternoon.

The song ends with:

All you ever want to do is drink and watch TV
And frankly that thing doesn't really interest me
I swear I'm going to bite you hard
And taste your tinny blood
If you don't stop the self-defeating lies
You've been repeating since the day you brought me home
I know you're strong

A later Weakerthans release – "Reunion Tour" contained the sequel to the Virtute story and this one had the ominous title of "Virtute the Cat Explains Her Departure". Here are the lyrics:

It had something to do with the rain
Leaching, loamy dirt
And the way the back lane came alive
Half moon whispered, "Go"
For a while I heard you missing steps in the street
And your anger pleading in an uncertain key
Singing the sound that you found for me

When the winter took the tips of my ears Found this noisy home Full of pigeons and places to hide And when the voices die I emerged to watch abandoned machines Waiting for their men to return I remember the way I would wait for you
To arrive with kibble and a box full of beer
How I'd scratch the empties desperate to hear
You make the sound that you found for me

After scrapping with the ferals and the tabby I'd let you brush my matted fur How I'd knead into your chest while you were sleeping Your shallow breathing made me purr

But I can't remember the sound that you found for me I can't remember the sound that you found for me I can't remember the sound...

This song is so beautiful and sad. I encourage you to listen to it at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuhBQoE1Hr0 This article is summarized from https://drunkinagraveyard.com/2016/10/26/the-saga-of-virtute-the-cat-canadiana-folk-punk-and-john-k-samson/ See this article for an expanded coverage of the saga of Virtute the cat.

A Story from Cocaine Anonymous: Finding Hope – From Broken to Home

My name is Trinique and I am an addict. I came in and out of C.A. for about 5 years. I was beaten and broken. I always heard in the rooms that willingness was indispensable. When I came in for my last time, I finally had this willingness everyone in C.A. spoke about. A lady who became my sponsor, came and found me in the psych ward. She sat across from me; she listened, related and won my confidence that she in fact was also at one point an addict beyond human aid. Upon my release I met with this woman as much as I could, for as long as I could and did everything that was asked of me. I had hit a point where I had come to terms that I would die a junkie death, but I couldn't seem to die. My sponsor told me if I completed the 12 steps, did them the way they were laid out and was honest, open minded and willing, I would live a life I could have never imagined. I thought to myself what do I have to lose? When I returned to C.A. I was welcomed with love. A love I hadn't felt for a very long time. When I came back to the rooms, I couldn't love myself, not after finding hope from broken to home everything I had done. So, I let a room full of recovered addicts love me, for me. I listened with desperation. I accepted help. I reached out. I was never turned away. C.A. became my family. They understood me. After so many years of doing everything to find my place, I had finally arrived.

A few months into my recovery, I got pregnant. This scared me as I already have a son, I'm a few months in and still learning how to live life on life's terms. My partner and I knew thought that this was not by mistake. Nothing in god's world happens by mistake. Being pregnant, during a pandemic was difficult. It was scary. My addiction did not care I was pregnant, my addiction thrives in isolation. If it was not for my newfound family in C.A., I don't think I would have made it out alive. I would call people at all hours of the night. Again, never turned away, always welcomed. I now am a proud, recovered mother of two beautiful children. I am to be married, and once I am finished maternity leave, I will have a career I can start. These are all things I never believed could come true for me. When I sat down in the chair at C.A. and brought honesty, willingness, and an open mind with me, God started doing for me what I could not do for myself. This program did not just get me sober; it gave me a design for living. What was so freely given to me, I work to give back to those who are in the depths, caught in that hopeless state of mind. I attend my homegroup every week, it is the first ever women's C.A. meeting in the Calgary area. It has brought me meaningful connections with many women, I find unity, recovery and service.

15 months into my recovery I hit a wall. It was an emotional relapse. I was in a dark depression and experienced the spiritual malady flare up to a level it had not in sobriety before. I could not understand what I was missing. I was working with others, but it was not fueling me like before; I went to meetings, but it seemed lifeless. I had to dig deep. I reached out to others, new people I had never talked to before. Many women who had approached me with a year or more had experienced this. I was missing step 11. It wasn't until I understood the true essence of step 11 and working it to my best ability, did my recovery take on new meaning. My recovery today would not be where it is if I did not have this willingness every single day. It is not easy living life on life's terms, stuff comes up and when it does, I must work vigorously to use the tools that were laid at my feet. As a child, a teenager and in early adulthood I searched everywhere and did everything I could to fill the void that was so present in me. It ate me alive day by day. I could not understand why no matter where I went, what I did, I never fit in. I was on the outside always looking in. Through working the steps with a sponsor, and that is someone who has been through the steps before you and shares their experiences with you, I found a power greater than myself that restored me to sanity. Through C.A. I have found a family who has accepted me and loved me at my worst and showed up with bells on to every milestone of mine. I will do whatever I can for the fellowship of C.A., I will give to others what was freely given to me. I thank my higher power every morning for that first day of the rest of my life, the day I came in and surrendered.

Reprinted from Southern Alberta Area Cocaine Anonymous Newsletter (January – March 2023)

WHAT IS GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS?

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from a gambling problem. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop gambling. There are no dues or fees for Gamblers Anonymous membership as we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

Gamblers Anonymous is not affiliated with any religious or political organizations or institutions. We do not wish to engage in any controversies and we neither endorse nor oppose any causes. Our primary purpose is to stop gambling and to help other compulsive gamblers do the same.

Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real problem gamblers. No one likes to think they are different from other people. Therefore, it is not surprising that our gambling careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could gamble like other people. The idea that somehow, some day, we will control our gambling is the great obsession of every compulsive gambler. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of prison, insanity or death.

We learned we had to concede fully to our innermost selves that we are compulsive gamblers. This is the first step in our recovery. With reference to gambling, the delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed. We have lost the ability to control our gambling. We know that no real compulsive gambler ever regains control. All of us felt at times we were regaining control, but such intervals - usually brief -were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. We are convinced that gamblers of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period, we get worse, never better. Therefore, in order to lead normal happy lives, we try to practice to the best of our ability, certain principles in our daily affairs. For more information about the fellowship of Gambler's Anonymous, see our website here - http://www.gamblersanonymous.org

20 OUESTIONS TO HELP YOU DETERMINE IF YOU ARE A COMPULSIVE GAMBLER

- 1. Did you ever lose time from work or school due to gambling?
- 2. Has gambling ever made your home life unhappy?
- 3. Did gambling affect your reputation?
- 4. Have you ever felt remorse after gambling?
- 5. Did you ever gamble to get money with which to pay debts or otherwise solve financial difficulties?
- 6. Did gambling cause a decrease in your ambition or efficiency?
- 7. After losing did you feel you must return as soon as possible and win back your losses?
- 8. After a win did you have a strong urge to return and win more?
- 9. Did you often gamble until all your money was gone?
- 10. Did you every borrow to finance your gambling?
- 11. Have you ever sold anything to finance gambling?
- 12. Were you reluctant to use "gambling money" for normal expenditures?
- 13. Did gambling make you careless of the welfare of yourself or your family?
- 14. Did you ever gamble longer than you had planned?
- 15. Have you ever gambled to escape worry, trouble, boredom, loneliness, grief or loss?
- 16. Have you ever committed, or considered committing, an illegal act to finance gambling?
- 17. Did gambling cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
- 18. Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations create within you an urge to gamble?
- 19. Did you ever have an urge to celebrate any good fortune by a few hours of gambling?
- 20. Have you ever considered self-destruction or suicide as a result of your gambling?

Central Alberta Narcotics Anonymous Member Shares His Story of Recovery

There is a path out of addiction, says a central Alberta man who's gone through hell and back, eventually becoming a member of Narcotics Anonymous.

D.J., whose name is being withheld for the sake of anonymity, has come a long way, now four years clean and recently a speaker at the Red Deer's Wellbriety conference. He wants his story to not just shine a light on how addiction truly works but be a beacon for others experiencing the same ordeals he did. It started at an early age for D.J., raised by a single mom while his dad was in and out of jail until passing away when D.J. was 11, he shares.

"My mom did her best to raise me, but eventually some not so pleasant experiences happened to me at an early age and went on for a couple years until it was exposed. When my dad died, it wasn't long until I was blackout drinking. Finding drugs and booze at 12 proves to be challenging," he says. "I wasn't using all the time, but when I did, it was excessive. At one point as a teen, a friend's older brother had given us a weed pipe, and unknown to us was that it had crack cocaine in it. It was such an extreme euphoria, and I was hooked instantly."

Years later, D.J. wound up behind bars himself, and both his wife and kids were lost from his life. "I just felt like I was young, the world was at my feet, and I had lots of time to change. I thought that if I wanted to stop the substance use, I could, but that was a lie," he says in retrospect. "There's this metaphor we talk about, where people who use drugs recreationally are like a cucumber, because they can take it or leave it. But you cross this line at some point where you become a pickle. That's the point at which you can't go back to being a cucumber. The disease of addiction can leave us powerless." Now 38, D.J., who is Métis, says he doesn't believe himself to be a direct product of residential schools, though he is looking into it and how intergenerational trauma may have impacted him, he shares.

D.J. got out of jail and was accepted into a transitional faith-based housing program called Lazarus House, operated by Potter's Hands. He soon discovered Narcotics Anonymous underneath the apartment in which he was living. His message for those seeking a way out is — number one — that Narcotics Anonymous is a viable option, and there's only one prerequisite: a desire to stop using.

Narcotics Anonymous has no strings attached, as in there are no fees or dues to pay, nor any pledges or promises to make. It is for anyone, D.J. says. "There is therapeutic value to one addict helping another. When I got clean, I was at a dead end; no one wanted to talk to me or be near me. I attended numerous treatment centres, did detoxes, was in institutions and psych wards, and they can work, but at all those places, it was just about *my* drug problem," he describes. "One of us helping another was a game changer for me. With Narcotics Anonymous, everyone wanted to tell me about *their* drug problem and the solutions *they* found. Instead of 'you should, and you could,' it was people's actual experiences."

D.J. now has the proverbial new lease on life he'd always wanted, but for so long couldn't see a path toward. "In the end, I go through my days clean, free of anger, resentment and hurt; all the stuff that kept me weighted down before," he says. "Narcotics Anonymous has given me my life back, including my kids and wife. I've kept a job long enough to go to apprenticeship school, and I'm working in the trades now. People come to me with work offers."

Narcotics Anonymous meets frequently with 200 meetings weekly across Alberta. For more information about meetings, visit https://infodrugrehab.com/na-meetings-in-canada/na-meetings-in-alberta/. Type in your city and a list of meetings will be provided.

April 2023 South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
2 □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	3 \[\text{12:00 PM Fellowship} \] \[\text{Nooner (AA)} \] \[\text{6:30 PM Our Basic Text} \] \[\text{(AA)} \] \[\text{8:00 PM Awakenings Men's} \] \[\text{Meeting (AA)} \]	4 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA)	5 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)	6	7 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 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)	8
9 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	10 □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) □ 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) □ 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)	11	12 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)	13 ☐ 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) ☐ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) ☐ 6:00 PM Dinner with Bill (AA)	14 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 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)	15 10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
16 □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	17 □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) □ 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) □ 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)	18 □ 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) □ 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) □ 7:00 PM ISMs (AA)	19 □ 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) □ 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)	20 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:00 PM Dinner with Bill (AA)	21 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 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)	22 10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
23 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	24 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)	25 ☐ 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) ☐ 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) ☐ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) ☐ 7:00 PM ISMs (AA)	26 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA)	27	28 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 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)	29 □ 10:30 AM Fellowship Breakfast Group (AA) □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) □ 2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous □ 7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
30 □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA)	31 □ 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) □ 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) □ 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA)					