

Fellowship Centre Newsletter: August 2023



**fellowship
centre**
south edmonton

9122 34A Avenue NW, Edmonton, T6E 5P4

Telephone: 780-220-7811

Email: info@fellowship-centre.org

Website: <https://fellowship-centre.org>

MESSAGE FROM EDITOR JULIA

I am extremely grateful for the beautiful weather we are having in a prosperous province in a free country. The Edmonton Heritage Festival is a family-friendly, alcohol and drug-free celebration of multiculturalism held August 5 – 7 at the Edmonton EXPO Centre - 7515 118 Avenue NW. 12 Step recovery is truly multicultural with the Big Book being published around the world and in many languages. 12 Step recovery, like addiction, knows no boundaries.



Chinese Big Book



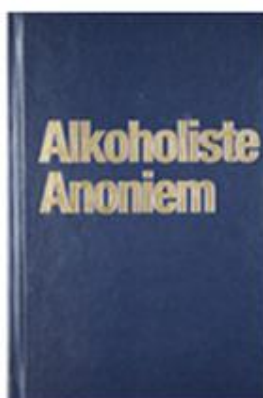
Greek Big Book



Hebrew Big Book



Arabic Big Book



Afrikaans Big Book



Bulgarian Big Book

In this month's newsletter two early evening meetings are spotlighted: *Our Basic Text* and *Dinner with Bill*. The president of the Centre presents two important sections of the draft Operational Policies and Procedures document inviting feedback from the recovery community. Personal stories and testimonials of recovery from a variety of addictions confirm the effectiveness of 12 Step recovery. However, it only works if you work it and the more you work it the better it seems to work. Please consider submitting anything appropriate for publication in future newsletters directly to me at editor@fellowship-centre.org.

SPOTLIGHT ON TWO MEETINGS

Our Basic Text: Mondays at 6:30 PM

Our Basic Text is a weekly AA meeting that reads and discussed the Big Book referred to in the prefaces to the third and fourth editions as *the basic text of our Society*. In August 2022 *Our Basic Text* held its first meeting at 6:30 PM. This time allowed the new men's meeting to start at 8:00 PM. The group started by reading the forwards to each edition, continued reading the first 164 pages which details the 12 Step program of recovery, and are now well into the stories in the second half of the Big Book. When we finish the last story, we will start again with the forwards to each edition. This meeting is ideally suited for anyone who needs to read the Big Book for the first or 50th time. It is enjoyable reading and discussing the Big Book with others as this gives us new insight into *the basic text of our Society*. All are welcome.

Dinner with Bill: Thursdays at 6:00 PM

In this meeting, every Thursday at 6:00 PM, we read from the book *Language of the Heart* which brings together every article written by Bill W. for the Grapevine during the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. In 1945 the Grapevine was established as a local newsletter for New York AA groups. Since 1949 it has been the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous. Since each Grapevine article in *Language of the Heart* is rather brief, there is considerable time during the meeting to enjoy fellowship, discuss the reading and share more generally on our journey of recovery.

Six o'clock was chosen as an ideal time for dinner and to allow for a 7:30 PM meeting space at the Centre when someone or a group decides to open a mutual support recovery meeting at the Centre. A light dinner is provided sometimes by volunteers who, for example, order pizza or by volunteers who prepare the dinner. Those attending the dinner meeting are encouraged to put as much as they can in the 7th tradition so that, in some cases, dinner can be subsidized, but most importantly, so that a donation can be made to the Centre in lieu of rent. All are welcome.

Chicken Hotdogs and Pasta Salad Served in July



Deviled Ham Sandwiches and Vegetable Soup Served in July



From the President

The Centre has been operational for exactly 20 months. In that time, the number and diversity of meetings held at the Centre has increased dramatically. As can be seen on the monthly calendar, the Centre now hosts 24 weekly meetings across five different 12 Step fellowships. Such rapid growth, although we ought never be organized, has resulted in the need for policy related to the way the Centre operates as mandated by our non-profit status. For example, if someone wants to open a meeting at the Centre, we will have a policy to guide approval and ensure that the proposed meeting is consistent with Centre objectives as specified in our provincial non-profit status. The final operational policy must be approved by voting members of the Centre at the Annual General Meeting which will be held in the fall. In the meantime, the current and future Newsletters will include sections of the draft Operational Policies and Procedures document. All feedback and comments are very welcome. Please email me directly at directors@fellowship-centre.org.

Yours in service,
Wayne W.

IV. Reoccurring Mutual Support Recovery Meetings

1. A reoccurring (e.g., weekly) meeting held at the Centre shall be approved by the president and at least two other directors if and for as long as it adheres to the following criteria:
 - a. Its purpose is to provide mutual support:
 - i. recovery from any substance (e.g., alcohol) or activity (e.g., gambling) addiction or
 - ii. for families of addicts (e.g., Al-Anon) and
 - iii. it is affiliated with an established 12 Step fellowship (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous).
 - b. It is managed entirely by unpaid volunteers at least one of whom:
 - i. has at least two years of continuous sobriety, clean time or equivalent.
 - ii. has at least three character references from Centre directors, members, active volunteers and/or their 12 Step Fellowship Central Office or equivalent.
 - iii. is responsible for the operation of the meeting and for maintaining the integrity of the Centre.
 - iv. is responsible for e-transferring at the end of each month a donation to the Centre in lieu of rent for the time, space, and supplies used by those attending the weekly meeting.
 - v. holds one key to the Centre and is responsible for additional keys, if needed, that may be shared with others who are trusted to operate the meeting and maintain the integrity of the Centre.
 - vi. agrees to monitor Centre key use and ensure additional keys are not reproduced.
 - vii. is responsible for ensuring that the meeting appears on the meeting list of its 12 Step Fellowship Central Office or equivalent.
 - viii. informs the president or a director/volunteer designated by the president of any matters that occur before, during or after the meeting that may affect the integrity and operations of the Centre (e.g., violence, destruction of Centre property).
2. A reoccurring meeting (e.g., Recovery First) not adhering to the criteria listed in Operational Policy and Procedures IV.1 (e.g., not a 12 Step recovery program) may be open and operated at the Centre if:

- a. a director makes a motion at the AGM or a Special Meeting that a specific non-compliant meeting be allowed to operate at the Centre.
 - b. a majority of voting members vote in favour of the motion to operate that specific non-compliant meeting.
 - c. the meeting accepts and adheres to criteria modified from Operational Policy and Procedures IV.1 and set in writing by the president or a director/volunteer designated by the president.
3. The president or a director/volunteer designated by the president is responsible for maintaining a list of all individuals who hold keys to the Centre. If a key is lost or not returned, it will be noted on the keyholder list. Based on the keyholder list, the Board shall determine if the lock to the front door of the Centre will be replaced, and new keys issued to existing key holders.
4. A meeting at the Centre shall be closed if:
 - a. the volunteer/s who operate the meeting inform the president or a director of their intentions to close the meeting or
 - b. the president and at least two other directors determine that the meeting has consistently failed, despite at least two documented cautions, to adhere to Operational Policy and Procedures IV.1 or to the modified criteria specified in Operational Policy and Procedures IV.2.c. and
 - c. all key/s are returned to the president or a director and noted on the key holders list.

V. Special Events

1. A special event held at the Centre (e.g., fundraisers, gratitude dinners, Step studies) shall be approved by the president and two additional directors if it adheres to the following criteria:
 - a. its purpose is to provide direct (e.g., Step Study) and/or indirect (e.g., fundraiser) mutual support recovery to addicts and/or their families and friends.
 - b. all effected weekly meetings agree to accommodate the special event.
 - c. it is proposed, organized, and managed by a Centre meeting/group with one meeting/group member assuming responsibility for the event. That responsible member shall:
 - i. have at least two years of continuous sobriety, clean time or equivalent.
 - ii. have at least three character references from Centre directors, members, active volunteers and/or their 12 Step Fellowship Central Office or equivalent.
 - iii. ensure minimal disruption to weekly mutual support recovery meetings before, after, and during the event as set in writing following consultation with the president or a director/volunteer designated by the president.
 - iv. ensure that the Centre is left clean and organized as was the case before the event.
 - v. ensure that a monetary donation is e-transferred to the Centre within three business days following the completion of the event in lieu of time, space, and supplies used for the event.
2. The keys to the Centre that are used by the event-hosting meeting/group for their weekly mutual support recovery meeting shall be used for the special event.
3. All fundraisers held at the Centre must clearly state how funds raised will be used to benefit the recovery community.
4. Any proposed special event not adhering to Operational Policy and Procedures V.1-3 requires the approval of the Board who set in writing modified criteria that must be accepted by the organizer of the special event.

The Eighth Tradition

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.



Spiritual as it is, A.A. remains very much of this world. The Eighth Tradition, like the Seventh, focuses on a vulgar five-letter word that isn't actually mentioned in either: money. Many of us have had to explain to some cynical prospect, "No, I'm not a social worker. I don't get paid for talking with you. I'm doing it because it's the best way to stay sober myself."

This does not mean, of course, that the idea of turning professional has never entered any A.A.'s mind. In the lean years, Bill W. did think of becoming a lay therapist to earn money through his experience in helping alcoholics. But, with a strong nudge from the group conscience, he soon realized that he could never hang out a shingle reading "Bill W., A.A. Therapist, \$10 an Hour"! It became clear to the early members that no A.A. should ever ask or accept payment for "carrying this message to somebody else, person to person and face to face."

Apology, Amends, Undo

One dictionary defines an apology as: “an admission of error or discourtesy accompanied by an expression of regret,” and it defines and amends as: “reparation or compensation for a loss, damage, or injury of any kind.” I offer you an apology when I accidentally step on your toe. I offer you an amends when I have caused you hurt or harm in some way.

Amends To	Reason	The Personality Trait In Us That Caused the Injury / Harm	NOW	POST-PONED	N/A	DONE
My Mother	For stealing money from her purse				X	3/15/17

The N/A column still requires an action on our part. Even though we may not be able to ever make an amends to that person, place or thing directly, we still need to consider what action we can take to get right with God regarding it.

“N/A” Amends That Need To Be Made	Specific Action We Are Prepared To Take	DONE
My mother for stealing money from her purse	Donated \$150.00 to Habitat for Humanity	3/15/17



“It’s an UNDO button”.

Cartoon by Kate Curtis. All of Kate’s cartoons can be found on her blog at <http://cluestolife.wordpress.com>.

If only there was an undo button, but we in recovery try to make amends for our misdeeds and we learn how to do better in the future. How we wish we had said or done something differently, that we had spent more time with family and friends, and that we had given someone more of ourselves when they needed us most, but no matter how far down we have gone, we begin to see how our experiences can benefit others. In step 8, we make a list of those we have harmed in preparation for step 9 by which we make our amends where possible. After that, we practice step 10 continuing to take personal inventory and promptly admitting when we are wrong. Hence, we have less and less need for an undo button. We live more in reality and avoid wishful thinking.

No Longer Alone (a personal story from Toronto SAA)

When I was seven, a friend showed me some pornographic pictures in her parents' room, and the seed for my sex addiction was planted. At 15, I started masturbating with pornography after finding some magazines in my brother's room.

I had not been taught healthy ways to process the fear and anger I constantly carried with me, and I used sex to avoid feeling these emotions. Comparing myself to women in pornographic magazines, I felt like I could never measure up physically and sexually to other women. This fear plagued me well into adulthood.

When I was in grade 10, I started living a double life. By day, I was an honour student and after school I would act out with boys I knew in places where we risked getting caught. I felt a powerful high when these boys expressed surprise that such a "good" girl could do what I was doing. I thought that maybe with my acting out "talents" I could get a boyfriend and finally feel loved.

These patterns continued throughout my 20's. I yearned to be taken care of sexually, emotionally, and financially as I had never learned how to take responsibility for meeting those needs myself. I risked getting an STD on several occasions and became pregnant one time.

In my late 20's I started acting out with married men and hit my first bottom when I started fantasizing about stalking one of these men. I stopped acting out on several painful behaviours for a few years and came to SAA after hitting another bottom with internet pornography. SAA is helping me to heal at a deep level and I am starting to love myself physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I am no longer alone thanks to SAA, and I have hope for a happy life.

<https://saatoronto.org/stories/>

A Gift of Hope (a personal story from Australia OA)

When I first came to OA, I was a very sad person. My weight was higher than it had ever been, and I found myself unable to stick to any diet, for even one day. Each morning I would wake up filled with self-loathing, ashamed of my weakness and my appearance. I felt I was undeserving of love. I would look in the mirror and see only fat.

The fat was not my only problem. My relationships were full of conflict. I was angry and resentful. I was always in conflict with someone. It seemed that life never turned out the way I wanted. I became more and more isolated and depressed. I was suicidal.

I had always struggled with food. Even as a small child, I would sneak and hide food, steal food, and finish food left on other people's plates. Although I had lost weight at different times in my life, the obsession with food continued and these behaviors always returned.

When I came to Overeaters Anonymous, I was greeted by others who shared my experiences. They offered me the gift of hope. After my very first meeting, my cloud of self-loathing lifted. I was now living in the solution, not the problem. I learned that I have a disease called compulsive overeating. This disease, I learned, is three-fold. It is emotional, spiritual, and physical. To become a functioning human being, I needed to tackle all these aspects of my illness. I learned that the weight I carry is a symptom of the emotional and spiritual inability to deal with life on life's terms.

I've been coming to OA for over 3 years now and have lost 9 kilos. But more importantly, I've gained freedom from self-loathing and the pain associated with living a life that was totally unmanageable. I have also gained enough experience, strength and hope to allow me to help others by being an OA Sponsor. My recovery hasn't been perfect, and I still have a long way to go, but in OA, I have been given the tools and support I need to manage my life and to become a grateful member of the human race.

<https://oaadelaide.org/personal-stories/>

Gamblers Anonymous Testimonials (from Saskatchewan GA)

I had been struggling with my gambling addiction for almost 20 years. It started when I was fourteen with Bingo, then progressed to Sport Select, VLT's, the Internet, and when I was of age, to the Casino. There was no amount of money that I wouldn't spend and nothing I wouldn't gamble on. Today, with a lot of hard work, the help of my higher power, my sponsor, and others in the program, I have been blessed with more than two years of sobriety. The future looks bright, and if I continue the things I am doing, I will continue to arrest the disease that has plagued my life for so long. So, if you are reading this and think that your story is like mine, or that you aren't sure if your life can be turned around, give G.A. a try and get back the life that you deserve!

Dwayne

Unfortunately, my story is too common. I became a widow, and then a compulsive gambler. After my husband died, I found I would wander to the casino to escape from my own thoughts. After about three years I found I was lying about where I had been because I was ashamed. I went to my first meeting not believing I really had a problem. I got a year in and walked away due to a personality conflict. Three years later I was back, broken and defeated. All the insurance money was gone, retirement gone, credit cards and line of credit maxed out. Because of Gamblers Anonymous I now have a happy ending. I have made friends, purchased a home, and retired. I will be celebrating my 10th birthday and still attend meetings regularly. Life is good.

Patricia

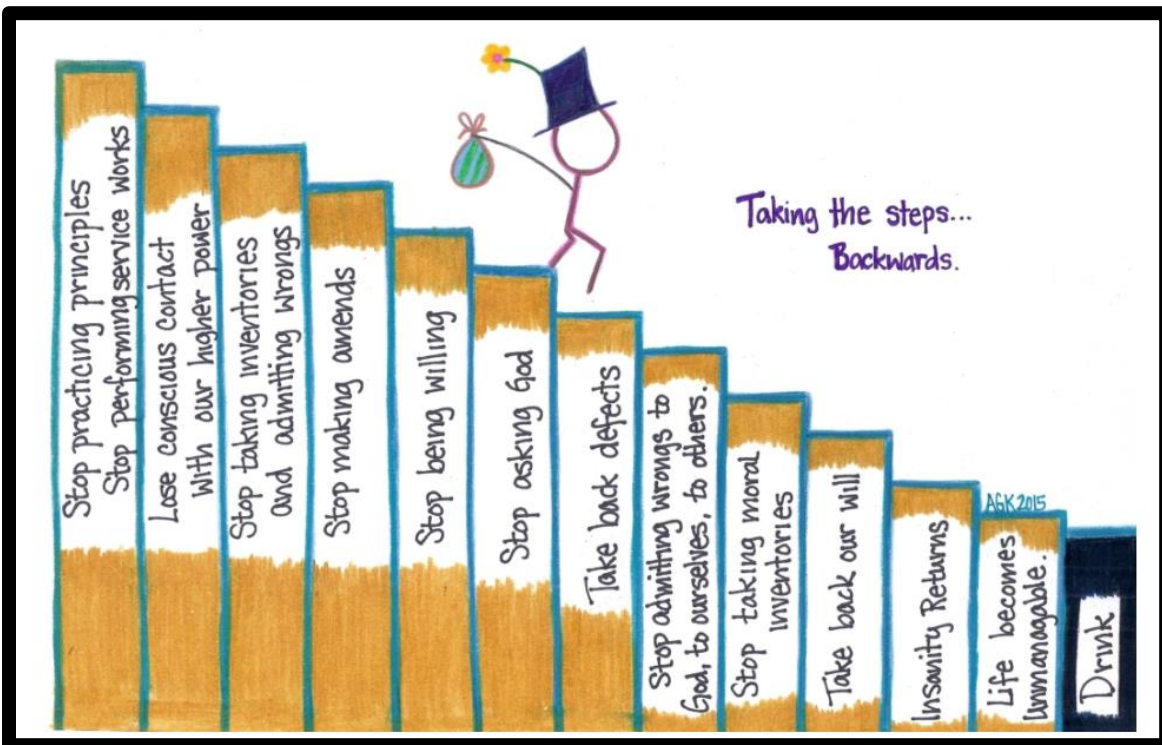
Before the GA program I hated myself and I used gambling to escape the feelings of self-loathing. Today I'm not perfect, but I can honestly say that I love who I am and can gladly accept my place in the universe. Through the will of my higher power, the fellowship and the 12 steps I am capable of so much more than I ever was when I was feeding my addiction. Five years ago, I didn't have the will to live. Today, I have a beautiful family, stability, and serenity. None of this would be possible without Gambler's Anonymous meetings and the 12 steps. I honestly believe I owe everything I have accomplished over this time to the program and without it I would still be the insecure, suffering person I was in action. Gambler's Anonymous saved my life, and I honestly believe it can save anyone who wants to be saved and is willing to do the work.

Mike B

I lived in constant fear; of creditors, other people, failure, new situations – you name it. Feeling alone and uncomfortable around others, full of fear and self-doubt, gambling was my way of escaping. And boy, did I escape. When I came to Gamblers Anonymous, my bank accounts were \$45,000 overdrawn, I was living in my car, and totally self-consumed. My only thoughts were focused on making the next bet. Many nights after a big loss at the casino, I'd sit in the parking lot telling myself 'I'm never doing this again'. Then I'd be back there the next day. Then I came to GA and surrendered, got a sponsor, and got to work on myself. Now, I live with purpose. This program and the people in it have helped me find true happiness and self-worth. The 12 steps, sponsorship, and attending meetings is truly my key to a wonderful life.

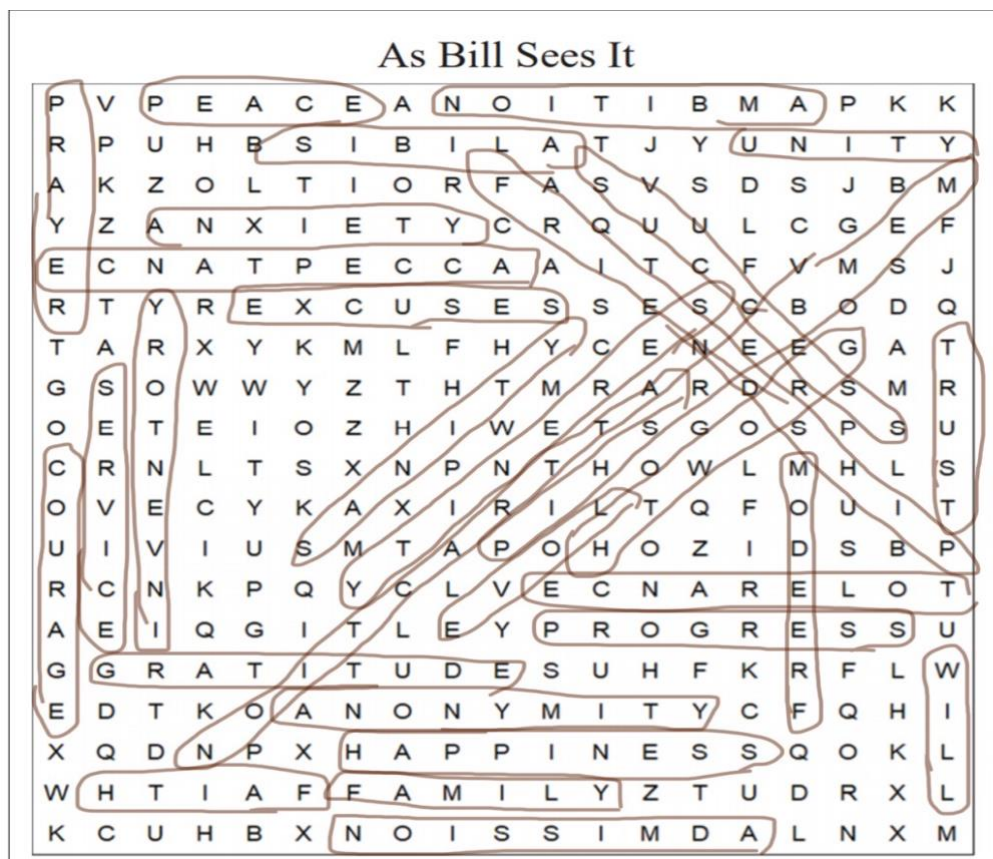
Adam

<https://www.gamblersanonymoussaskatchewan.org/testimonials/#:~:text=I%20found%20out%20that%20no,Life%20is%20so%20much%20easier!>



Ann Kroger's AA writings and cartoons can be found on her blog at <https://annkroger.com/>

ANSWERS TO JULY WORD PUZZLE



August 2023 South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:30 PM Overeaters Anonymous 6:00 PM Dinner with Bill (AA) 	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 	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"> 10:30 AM Girlfriend Hour (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:00 PM Sunday Night Step Group (CA) 	7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 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"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:30 PM Overeaters Anonymous 6:00 PM Dinner with Bill (AA) 	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 	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
13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30 AM Girlfriend Hour (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:00 PM Sunday Night Step Group (CA) 	14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA) 	15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 	17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:30 PM Overeaters Anonymous 6:00 PM Dinner with Bill (AA) 	18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 	19 <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
20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30 AM Girlfriend Hour (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:00 PM Sunday Night Step Group (CA) 	21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:30 PM Our Basic Text (AA) 8:00 PM Awakenings Men's Meeting (AA) 	22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 2:30 PM Overeaters Anonymous 3:30 PM OA Business 6:00 PM Dinner with Bill (AA) 	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 	26 <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
27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30 AM Girlfriend Hour (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:00 PM Sunday Night Step Group (CA) 	28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 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"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 10:30 AM Sunshine (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM ISMs (AA) 	30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 7:00 PM There is a Solution (CA) 			