

Fellowship Centre Newsletter: September 2023



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

There are three important dates in September. First, Labour Day is celebrated on the first Monday of September, and it is a federal statutory holiday. This holiday officially celebrates workers and the labour union movement, however, most of us only think of it as the last long weekend of the summer, a perfect occasion for one last sober BBQ or canoe trip. Additionally, a new statutory holiday observed on September 30 commemorates the legacy of residential schools fulfilling one of many recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This is not a public holiday. Only federally regulated workplaces (such as the federal government, banks, post offices, etc.) will be closed to observe this new holiday. In 2023 British Columbia passed legislation to make September 30 a statutory holiday. Indigenous communities were initially opposed to using September 30 because that is when Orange Shirt Day is currently observed. Instead, June 21 was considered as the alternate day, which is currently the National Indigenous Peoples Day. This, according to the Federal Government, is only ten days away from Canada Day and would make the two statutory holidays too close together. Finally, the Autumnal Equinox occurs this year on Saturday, September 23rd at 2:50 AM. This day marks the moment when the sun is directly above the equator while moving from north to south and marks the beginning of Fall in the Northern Hemisphere.

Since there are 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, 12 Promises and 12 months, it is useful to use the month number of September to remind us of each of these three aspects of 12 Step recovery.

STEP NINE

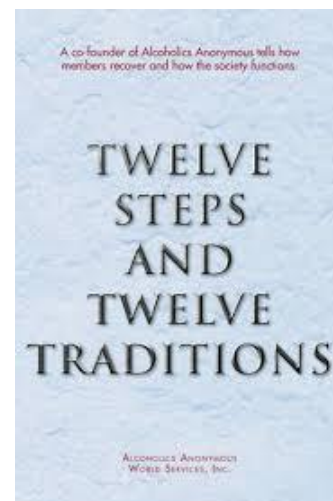
Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

TRADITION NINE

A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

PROMISE NINE

Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Potluck Dinner & Silent Auction

October 20, 2023, 6:00 to 9:00 PM

Speakers on “Roads to Recovery”

Sponsored by:

- 1. Fellowship Breakfast Group**
- 2. Awakenings Men’s Group**

The last silent auction raised approximately \$1000, and the last gratitude dinner raised approximately \$400, to keep the Centre doors open by subsidizing the many groups who give minimal donations in lieu of rent due to modest 7th Traditions. Fortunately, we are all in this together. The Centre is a community of individuals supporting each other on their journey of recovery from a range of substance and process addictions.

Donations of valuable items are needed for the silent auction. An income tax receipt can be issued to the donator for the auctioned price of any item. Contact Wayne at 780.394.0121 for more information on the silent auction or to donate an item to the silent auction.



Contact Frances at franceskb@outlook.com or text her at 780.660.4317 for more information on the potluck dinner or to donate an item to the potluck dinner.

Anger in Recovery

Perhaps the biggest reason that anger must be dealt with during recovery is that anger is strongly tied to relapse. Whether you hold anger inside or lash out at others, if it is not dealt with, numerous roadblocks can stand in the way of moving forward with your recovery. Unprocessed anger can result in further legal problems, more serious physical health problems, and general deceleration of the process of working through addiction recovery.

It is important to note that anger is a normal human response, but it can be warped and misdirected, causing problems for you and those around you. Fear and pain are often the twin roots of problematic anger. Fear and pain may be physical, psychological, or both. You may fear something or someone, but typically the greater fear is that of losing face, appearing ridiculous, or being abandoned. Likewise, your pain may involve physical pain, but often it includes the emotional pain that results from loss, a feeling of unfairness, or someone else's words and actions.

Managing anger effectively includes learning to recognize the people and situations that trigger the anger response. Write down a list of things that trigger anger, including family situations, work situations, situations with friends, things that happen during meetings, and things that happen in the company of strangers. Identifying why those things trigger anger is important. For example, you may become angry due to:

- Perfectionism
- Feeling unloved
- Feeling being taken advantage of
- Feeling misunderstood
- Helpless feelings
- Criticism
- Exhaustion
- Feelings of being treated unfairly

Knowing what triggers anger is the basis of learning to manage your anger effectively. Understanding when anger is causing physical symptoms, like heart racing, can help you interrupt this “fight or flight” response by focusing on breathing, taking a walk, or otherwise taking a break from the situation. Other techniques that you can successfully employ to manage anger include:

- Learned relaxation
- Humor
- Distraction
- Exercise
- Connecting with nature
- Positive self-talk
- Writing in a journal
- Asking for help

Addiction recovery and anger are often uneasy partners, but that does not mean recovery is impossible. Interrupting the anger response after recognizing it early can help you manage angry feelings before they result in inappropriate actions. Learning to manage anger is not the same thing as learning to suppress anger. Suppressing anger is ultimately counterproductive, and can result in too much tension building up, followed by an outburst that can and sometimes does lead to relapse.

<https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/recovery/coping-anger-addiction-recovery/>

Pillars of Recovery



Many 12 Step programs and other approaches to recovery use the concept of pillars to suggest what is essential to long-term recovery. For example, the triangle symbol in AA reflects the three principles or legacies of the program (recovery, unity, service) that are the remedies to the three-part disease of alcoholism (physical, mental, spiritual). CA uses the key pillars of hope, faith, and courage.



According to the U.S. substance abuse and mental health services administration, there are four pillars or major dimension to recovery.

1. **Health** Overcoming or managing one's disease or symptoms, and making informed healthy choices that support physical and emotional well-being.
2. **Home** Having a stable and safe place to live.
3. **Purpose** Conducting meaningful daily activities, such as a job, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavours, and the independence, income, and resources to participate in society.
4. **Community** Having relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope.



The Five Pillars of Recovery from Addiction Blog suggests that recovery must include:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Maintain rigorous honesty. In addiction our lives were built upon lies and false narratives we told ourselves and others. | 2. Expose your secrets. |
| | 3. Let go of your secrets. |
| | 4. Remember you aren't alone. |
| | 5. Know you matter. |

The AA for Agnostics website reminds us that “Willingness, honesty and open-mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable” When I got the Gift of Desperation (an acronym for GOD) and became teachable, the H.O.W. of the program became strikingly simple.

1. Honesty = An honest admission that I was powerless over alcohol. That I was unable to manage my life successfully drunk or sober.
2. Open-mindedness = Becoming teachable to the suggestions of a sponsor.
3. Willingness= to stop running the show of my life on self-will. To surrender daily and become willing to follow Good Orderly Direction. (another acronym for GOD).



A Prayer for Each Step

First Step Prayer

Dear Lord,
I admit that I am powerless over my addiction.
I admit that my life is unmanageable when I try to control it.
Help me this day to understand
The true meaning of powerlessness.
Remove from me all denial of my addiction.

Second Step Prayer

Heavenly Father,
I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity.
I humbly ask that you remove all twisted thought & Addictive behavior from me this day.
Heal my spirit & restore in me a clear mind.

Third Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to Thee
To build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt.
Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.
Take away my difficulties,
That victory over them may bear witness
To those I would help of Thy Power,
Thy love and Thy way of life,
May I do Thy will always!

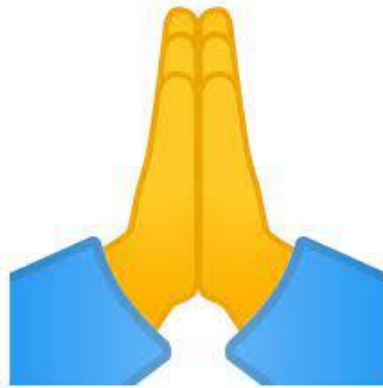
Fourth Step Prayer

Dear God,
It is I who has made my life a mess.
I have done it, but I cannot undo it.
My mistakes are mine and
I will begin a searching and fearless moral inventory.

I will write down my wrongs
But I will also include that which is good.
I pray for the strength to complete the task.

Fifth Step Prayer

Higher Power,
My inventory has shown me who I am, yet I ask for Your help in admitting my wrongs to another person and to You.
Assure me, and be with me, in this Step,
For without this Step I cannot progress in my recovery. With Your help, I can do this, and I do it.



Sixth Step Prayer

Dear God,
I am ready for Your help
In removing from me the defects of character
Which I now realize are an obstacle to my recovery.
Help me to continue being honest with myself and
Guide me toward spiritual and mental health.

Seventh Step Prayer

My Creator,
I am now willing that you should have all of

me, good and bad.
I pray that you now remove from me every
single defect of character
Which stands in the way of my usefulness to
you and my fellows.
Grant me strength, as I go out from here to
do your bidding.

Eighth Step Prayer

Higher Power,
I ask Your help in making my list of all
those I have harmed.
I will take responsibility for my mistakes
and
Be forgiving to others as You are forgiving
to me.
Grant me the willingness to begin my
restitution.
This I pray.

Ninth Step Prayer

Higher Power,
I pray for the right attitude to make my
amends,
Being ever mindful not to harm others in the
process.
I ask for Your guidance in making indirect
amends.
Most important, I will continue to make
amends
By staying abstinent, helping others and
Growing in spiritual progress.

Tenth Step Prayer

I pray I may continue:
To grow in understanding and effectiveness;
To take daily spot check inventories of
myself;
To correct mistakes when I make them;
To take responsibility for my actions;

To be ever aware of my negative and
Self-defeating attitudes and behaviors;
To keep my willfulness in check;
To always remember I need Your help;
To keep love & tolerance of others as my
code; and
To continue in daily prayer how I can best
serve You,
My Higher Power.

Eleventh Step Prayer

Higher Power, as I understand You,
I pray to keep my connection with You
Open and clear from the confusion of daily
life.
Through my prayers and meditation I ask
especially for
Freedom from self-will, rationalization, and
wishful thinking.
I pray for the guidance of correct thought
and positive action.
Your will Higher Power, not mine, be done.

Twelfth Step Prayer

Dear God,
My spiritual awakening continues to unfold.
The help I have received I shall pass on and
give to others,
Both in and out of the Fellowship.
For this opportunity I am grateful.
I pray most humbly to continue walking day
by day
On the road of spiritual progress.
I pray for the inner strength and wisdom
To practice the principles of this way of life
in all I do and say.
I need You, my friends, and the program
every hour of every day.
This is a better way to live.

From the President

As I mentioned in the August Fellowship Newsletter, the Centre has enjoyed rapid growth resulting in the need for policy related to the way the Centre operates as mandated by our 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. See below a section of the proposed operational policy that deals specifically with the newsletter. All feedback and comments are very welcome. Please email me directly at directors@fellowship-centre.org.

Yours in service,
Wayne W.

Draft Operational Policies and Procedures

VIII. Newsletter

1. A monthly newsletter shall be available to the recovery community and the public if an editor volunteers and is approved by the Board. The editor may be approved if she/he:
 - a. volunteers to be responsible for the Newsletter for at least two years.
 - b. has at least five years of continuous sobriety, clean time or equivalent.
 - c. has been an active participant at meetings and events held at the Centre for not less than two years.
 - d. has at least three character references from Centre directors, members, active volunteers and/or his/her 12 Step Fellowship Central Office or equivalent.
 - e. is a member of a Home Group at the Centre.
2. Board approval is required to appoint a newsletter editor who does not satisfy the criteria listed in Operational Policy and Procedures VIII.1.
3. The editor shall ensure that the monthly Newsletter:
 - a. regularly includes information relevant to all 12 Step recovery fellowships holding weekly meetings at the Centre.
 - b. occasionally includes information relevant to 12 Step recovery fellowships not holding weekly meetings at the Centre.
 - c. does not include anything (e.g., cartoons, articles) that could be deemed offensive, for example, but not limited to, foul language, racism, sexism, triggers, and derogatory statements.
 - d. does not promote meetings and events not held at the Centre.
 - e. does not promote any specific individual/s apart from 12 Step co-founders or early members (e.g., the man on the bed).
 - f. includes a monthly calendar of all weekly meetings and events held at the Centre.
 - g. promotes new meetings and upcoming events at the Centre.
 - h. encourages and includes, as may be appropriate, submissions (e.g., cartoons, articles, jokes) from the recovery community.
 - i. includes a summary of the Centre's income and expenses when requested by the president and as provided by the treasurer.
 - j. is emailed to all individuals who subscribe to the Newsletter via the Centre's website.
 - k. is available in hard copy at the Centre.
4. The editor may:
 - a. present recovery perspectives other than 12 Step recovery, for example, but not limited to, recent research findings and government initiatives relevant to addiction and recovery.
 - b. revise, acknowledge, and include information from other 12 Step recovery newsletters.
 - c. revise, acknowledge, and include information from addiction recovery websites.

Al-anon and Codependency



According to Wikipedia, codependency is:

A psychological condition or a relationship in which a person is controlled or manipulated by another who is affected with a pathological condition (typically narcissism or drug addiction); and in broader terms, it refers to the dependence on the needs of, or control of, another. It also often involves placing a lower priority on one's own needs, while being excessively preoccupied with the needs of others.

Alcoholism is a family illness. It is not only the addict or alcoholic that suffers. Even if family and friends are not in the grips of addiction themselves, they suffer nonetheless, and this suffering is often codependency.

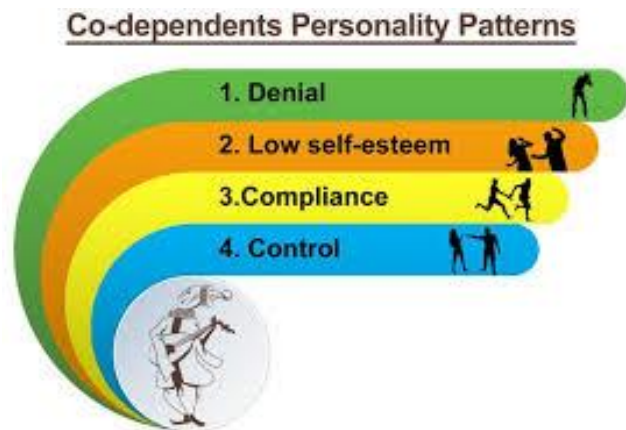
To those held in the grip of codependency, it feels as if the whole world would fall down if they were not shoring it up with their own shoulders. A codependent often thinks: "If I don't do this myself, it will never get done. Or at least not done correctly." Codependents frequently exhaust themselves. It seems they are giving so much to others that they have little left for themselves. Alongside this exhaustion is resentment. Codependent people are often resentful. They think no one seems to notice their sacrifices. No one asks about their needs. This seems unfathomable to the codependent! They consider themselves to be so intuitive to the needs of others.

There is a recurring story in an active alcoholic home. A codependent will tell the story to themselves. And they also tell it to the alcoholic. They may tell anyone who will listen everything would be fine if the drinker would stop drinking. If the addict really cared about him/her, he/she could quit. The codependent throws fits. He tries to manipulate, cajole and "love" the drinker into sobriety.

The codependent person tries to change everyone around them. This effort in control is making the situation worse. His/her actions and reactions are manifesting disharmony. He is unaware that, in reality, he has no control over another's drinking. He is incapable of curing his loved one. Regardless of what he says or does. Regardless of what he doesn't say or doesn't do.

CODEPENDENCY TEST: Answer YES or NO

1. Did you ever lose time from work due to your relationship with an addictive person?
2. Have your relationships made your life unhappy?
3. Have your relationships affected your reputation?
4. Have you ever felt remorse after manipulating the situation?
5. Did you ever control situations to get money to pay debts, household bills or otherwise resolve financial difficulties that belong to someone else?
6. Has your involvement in a relationship cause a decrease in your ambition or efficiency?
7. After a fight or disagreement, did you feel that you must get even?
8. After winning an argument, did you have a strong urge to restrict restate your point?
9. Did you often stay in a relationship until your last hope is gone?
10. Did you ever borrow money to finance another person's addiction or associated crisis?
11. Have you ever sold anything to finance another person's addiction or associated crisis?
12. Were you reluctant to purchase necessary items because it may cause a disagreement?
13. Did your relationship make you care less of the welfare of yourself and your family?
14. Did you ever stay in a degrading or dangerous situation longer than you planned?
15. Have you ever dragged old hertz into discussions about current items?
16. Have you ever committed, or considered committing, and illegal act to finance someone's addiction?
17. Did your relationship caused you to have difficulty in sleeping?
18. Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations create within you an urge to change someone else?
19. Did you ever have an idea that if loved ones would only see things your way, life would be much better?
20. Have you ever considered self-destruction as a result of your reactions or relationships?



Answering yes to five or more of these questions is an indication that codependency has become a problem in your life.

September 2023 South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
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| | | | | | 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) | 2 <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 |
| 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30 AM Girlfriend Hour (AA Women Only) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 6:00 PM Sunday Night Step Group (CA) | 4 <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) | 5 <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) | 6 <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) | 7 <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) | 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) | 9 <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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