

Fellowship Centre Newsletter: November 2023



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MESSAGE FROM EDITOR JULIA

Remembrance Day is November 11th. Rather than focus on war, let's focus on peace. The word **PEACE** occurs 7 times in the Big Book and 23 times in the 12 & 12. For example:

1.  ... **peace**. BB *Into Action*, pp.83-84
We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know **peace**.
2.  ... **peace**. 12&12 *Step Four*, p.44
Whenever a human being becomes a battleground for the instincts, there can be no **peace**.
3.  ... **peace**. 12&12 *Step Four*, p.47
We had to drink because our nation had won a war or lost a **peace**.
4.  ... **peace and ease**. BB *Into Action*, p.75
We can be alone at perfect **peace** and ease.
5.  ... **peace and harmony**, what was to become ... 12&12 *Tradition One*, p.130
If strong people were stalemated in the search for **peace** and harmony, what was to become of our erratic band of alcoholics?
6.  ... **peace and less brotherhood** than before. 12&12 *Step Three*, p.37
The sum of all this mighty effort is less **peace** and less brotherhood than before.
7.  ... **peace and serenity** as I had never ... BB *Bill's Story*, p.14
There was a sense of victory, followed by such a **peace** and serenity as I had never known.
8.  ... **peace, and** so we listed the people ... 12&12 *Step Twelve*, p.108
We had to begin to make our **peace**, and so we listed the people we had harmed and became willing to set things right.
9.  ... **peace, and** usefulness, in a way of ... BB *Bill's Story*, p.8
I was to know happiness, **peace**, and usefulness, in a way of life that is incredibly more wonderful as time passes.
10.  ... **peace, happiness, and sense of direction** flowed ... BB *We Agnostics*, p.50
In the face of collapse and despair, in the face of the total failure of their human resources, they found that a new power, **peace**, happiness, and sense of direction flowed into them.

SINCE NOVEMBER IS THE 11TH MONTH

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 in the power to carry that out.

Tradition 11

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

Promise 11

We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.

Spiritual Principle 11

The Spiritual Principle of Faith is inherent in the Eleventh Step. God has always met our needs, not our wants, our needs. Once more, we are reminded that our Higher Power hasn't brought us this far to drop us now! Recovery has given us a second chance at life.

Concept of World Service 11

The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

GRATITUDE FOR OUR BASIC TEXT

Have you ever found yourself stumped; I mean really lost when completing a task? I picked up a nightstand from Ikea and had this feeling wash over me, but as I followed the instructions (with pictures) the guidance brought me success. I am grateful for simple instructions, and that is what we have in the basic text of Alcoholics Anonymous. The forward to the first edition states "To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book". I like what our founders said about these instructions, Bill W. on page 14 "The moment I fully accepted them the effect was electric. There was a sense of victory." Doctor Bob said on page 181 "It never fails" if you put effort into following them. These are grand proposals and promises of hope, but what's more, for me is the pictures. Not the ink on the page, but the inscription of these words into the lives of the people that now carry the message of experience, strength, and hope that our basic text proclaims. The living examples of our basic text in action in the rooms of our meetings and lives of our members are what made the difference for me. Thank you, friends, for being the pictures to my instructions, I could not have done it without you.

John P. (Fellowship Breakfast Group)

OCTOBER FELLOWSHIP AND FUNDRAISING

October 9th Thanksgiving Lunch and Gratitude Nooner was a special opportunity to live the three legacies: unity, recovery, and service. Unity was expressed in our camaraderie and enjoyment of each other's company. Recovery was experienced in the beautiful meeting that focused on gratitude. Thank you to those who brought a salad or a pie and to those who organized and cleaned. That's service!



A member donated two tickets to the Oiler/Ducks game on November 26th. Ticket sales were brisk and on October 20, at the silent auction and potluck dinner, the winner was drawn and announced. \$510 was raised to subsidize the small groups they cannot pay much rent to the Centre. Thank you to the member who donated the tickets, the volunteers who sold tickets, and the many individuals who purchase tickets.



A silent auction and potluck dinner, hosted by the Fellowship Breakfast Group and the Men's Awakening Group, was held at the Centre on October 20th. \$1853 was raised to subsidize the small groups that cannot pay much rent to the Centre. Thank you to the members who donated the items, the volunteers who organized the event, the individuals who brought food, and the many individuals who attended.



BUDDHISM AND STEP ELEVEN

Successful recovery in any 12-Step program deeply depends on making a spiritual practice an intimate part of our daily lives. No matter if it is NA, OA, Al Anon, AA, or any other program molded from the principles developed by Bill W., and as early as Steps 2 and 3, it becomes clear that spirituality is a critical component in our continued recovery from the disease of addiction.

Many people in recovery discover and investigate Buddhism as a spiritual path because the 11th Step advises us to meditate, and the various Buddhist traditions, over the last 2,500 years, have developed many comprehensive and sophisticated systems of meditation. Another reason Buddhism appeals to a broad range of people in recovery is because it is an experiential spiritual practice that empowers us to improve our conscious contact with a Greater Power of our understanding through rational investigation, contemplation, and profound insight.

Most people who turn to Buddhism after entering recovery investigate it because of the wide-ranging and highly developed meditation practices found in many Buddhist traditions. All forms of Buddhist meditation, whether they be contemplation, visualization, sitting, standing, or walking, fit between and encompass the two poles of meditative practice; in Sanskrit these are called samatha, or “calm abiding” (sometimes called single-pointed concentration), and vipassana, or “clear seeing” (also known as insight meditation). Single-pointed concentration is a meditative practice where we truly not only “accept the things we cannot change,” but we also develop the courage to change the things that we can. To practice this meditation, we calm our busy minds: we sit with our breath (or some other object of concentration) and allow our mental activity to naturally wane, returning again and again to our breath whenever our mind inevitably wanders. In this way we not only develop serenity and tranquility, we change the only thing that we truly can change, our mind. Insight meditation is a distinctively Buddhist practice that helps us to develop insight into the nature of “things,” including ourselves, through our focused attention. As we sit in awareness of our breath, body, mind, and environment, this form of meditation encourages our cultivation of “the wisdom to know the difference” between the things we can change and the things we can’t. Regardless of what form of meditation we choose, research has demonstrated that meditation has numerous medical and psychological benefits: it reduces stress hormones and boosts our immune system, alleviates past psychological traumas, and enhances our overall sense of well-being. Meditation is a powerful friend to anyone who employs it in support of their recovery.

Buddhists recognize prayer as a powerful method of meditation. Prayer focuses our aspirations and transmits them to the Oneness of the Universe, which also includes us; from this boundlessness, the wellspring of all possibilities, and the laws of cause and effect, beneficial results arise. Our meditation practices can be either passive or active; prayer is a dynamically active form of meditation. Buddhists often pray for the benefit of others; this opens our lives to boundless compassion, which is greater than and embraces our individual cravings, delusions, and suffering. This prayer is an excellent example: “We dedicate the merits of this practice to all suffering addicts. May everyone be free of suffering, and the causes of suffering. May everyone enjoy happiness, and the causes of happiness.”

Adapted from <https://aaagnostica.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/12-Step-Buddhist-Insight.pdf>

TO THE COCAINE ANONYMOUS NEWCOMER

CA CENTRE MEETINGS 6:00 PM SUNDAYS & 7:00 PM WEDNESDAYS

Who is a Cocaine Addict?

Some of us can answer without hesitation, “I am!” Others aren’t so sure. Cocaine Anonymous believes that no one can decide for another whether he or she is addicted. One thing is sure, though: every single one of us has denied being an addict. For months, for years, we who now freely admit that we are cocaine addicts thought that we could control cocaine when in fact it was controlling us.

“I only use on weekends,” or

“It hardly ever interferes with work,” or

“I can quit, it’s only psychologically addicting, right?” or

“I only snort, I don’t base or shoot,” or

“It’s this relationship that’s messing me up.”

Many of us are still perplexed to realize how long we went on, never getting the same high we got at the beginning, yet still insisting, and believing—so distorted was our reality—that we were getting from cocaine what actually always eluded us. We went to any lengths to get away from being ourselves. The lines got fatter; the grams went faster; the week’s stash was all used up today. We found ourselves scraping envelopes and baggies with razor blades, scratching the last flakes from the corners of brown bottles, snorting or smoking any white speck from the floor when we ran out. We, who prided ourselves on our fine-tuned state of mind! Nothing mattered more to us than the straw, the pipe, the needle. Even if it made us feel miserable, we had to have it.

Some of us mixed cocaine with alcohol or other drugs and found temporary relief in the change, but in the end, it only compounded our problems. We tried quitting by ourselves, finally, and managed to do so for periods of time. After a month, we imagined we were in control. We thought our system was cleaned out and we could get the old high again, using half as much. This time, we’d be careful not to go overboard. But we only found ourselves back where we were before, and worse.

We never left the house without using first. We didn’t make love without using. We didn’t talk on the phone without coke. We couldn’t fall asleep; sometimes it seemed we couldn’t even breathe without cocaine. We tried changing jobs, apartments, cities, lovers—believing that our lives were being screwed up by circumstances, places, people. Perhaps we saw a cocaine friend die of respiratory arrest, and still we went on using! But eventually we had to face facts. We had to admit that cocaine was a serious problem in our lives, that we were addicts.

**To the
Newcomer**



Cocaine Anonymous World Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 492000
Los Angeles, CA 90049-8000
(310) 559-5833 FAX (310) 559-2554
www.ca.org

LIVING IN SOBRIETY FROM SEX ADDICTION

SAA MEETING AT THE CENTRE 7:00 PM SATURDAYS

When I discovered sex at 12 years old, through 1950's pornography, I was astounded by the feelings I got from it. The feelings I had were powerful, and I had been told that they were wrong, and I was wrong for having them. When I was told that my feelings -- which felt strong and normal -- were wrong, and I was wrong for having them, it didn't take long for me to believe it, and have a lower and lower feeling about myself. Deep down, I believed I was a lost soul.

I had no counseling from my parents, and when I 'confessed' to my priest for my wrongdoings, those feelings of inescapable sin were never far away. Eventually, I accepted them as part of being a bad or imperfect person. "And when I'm that bad," I thought, "I might as well run with it." And I did.

Throughout my life, I've been addicted to pornography, infidelity, anonymous sex -- so many different things. I was also a bad drunk. I managed to stay alive long enough to find AA and sobriety and have been sober from alcohol for many years. That sobriety, however, didn't change my sexual addiction. It didn't even slow it down.

What I have discovered is how important self-respect and self-love -- real self-love -- are to recovery from sexual addiction. My recovery from alcohol was due to a relationship with a power greater than myself. My sexual addiction, however, with its power and longevity, needs my total participation for recovery, and without self-love and self-respect, I don't believe it's completely possible. But that is definitely where that power greater than myself comes in. There's something that already loves me completely, and it's part of me -- my soul, my Higher Power.



I may make mistakes, but I've learned that mistakes are the steps to learning. I'm not perfect, and I never will be. But I can learn, and I can believe. And I believe that I can do this, with the help of that part of me that I see when I look at a picture of me, at 2 years old: A beautiful little fellow, with no sin in his soul. (<https://saa-recovery.org/wp-content/uploads/2023-09-TOC.pdf>)

The SAA newsletter, *The Outer Circle*, is published bi-monthly by the International Service Organization (ISO) of SAA. It is available without cost by download from this website or by request in writing to info@saa-recovery.org. The newsletter contains original articles and poetry about sex addiction written by members of the Fellowship.

FIVE NEW MEETINGS IN FIVE DAYS TO CELEBRATE FIVE YEARS

GA MEETING AT THE CENTRE 2:00 PM SATURDAYS

My name is Steve, and I am a compulsive gambler.

To mark a key milestone in my abstinence from gambling, I wish to reflect on what was a truly special week. I'd also like to discuss how GA has worked for me over the last 17 years. On 18th October, I was proud to reach five years since my previous bet. It is with thanks to the help of GA and the support from close family and friends that I can celebrate such a feat.

To mark this landmark, I resolved to do something a little different, by attempting to attend five GA meetings on five consecutive days. I explored the GA website to look for meetings nearby at times when I am available. I managed to drum up a bit of interest amongst my peers to join me throughout the week at the various other meetings. I was already feeling genuinely upbeat about the meetings to follow, but words fail to do justice to describe how positive I felt each night commuting home from each meeting. The reaction I got from telling my story to a new meeting was fantastic and I felt humbled by the various feedback I received each night.

I first passed through the doors of GA as a fresh-faced 23 year-old man and managed to attain five years abstinence. With this significant time under my belt, I began fading away from the meetings as I started a family and my priorities changed. I then returned to GA after a nine month gambling binge. I recognised I had to do things differently, but most significantly I needed to persist with my meetings and refrain from becoming complacent again.

Recognition of this massively spurred me on when I made it to five years clean once again last October. To ensure I do not make the same mistake I had previously, I have sought to try to share my story with others and experience other meetings. I implore people to visit new meetings like me, as it's beneficial to hear different stories and perspectives on recovery. Some meetings have slightly diverse formats, the general message/concept is the same, and they are all incredibly beneficial.

During my five meetings in five days, I believe I travelled around 300 miles commuting around the various meetings, and guess I met around 90 fellow compulsive gamblers, each with their unique story and it was worth it. Thank you to all those who made me feel welcome to the extraordinary meetings I experienced. So, what now? I avoid getting carried away and continue to take things one day at a time, keeping my meetings firmly in my weekly routine. I will never be cured. There is no cure for compulsive gambling, but with GA, you can arrest it. I will always need GA in my life.

Adapted from:

[https://www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk/downloads/NEWLIFE_ISSUE_2_WEB_AW-\(1\)-FINAL-PROOF-58.pdf](https://www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk/downloads/NEWLIFE_ISSUE_2_WEB_AW-(1)-FINAL-PROOF-58.pdf)

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS TOOLS OF RECOVERY

OA MEETING AT THE CENTRE 2:30 PM THURSDAYS

A plan of eating helps us abstain from compulsive eating, guides us in our dietary decisions, and defines what, when, how, where, and why we eat. This Tool helps us deal with the physical aspects of our disease and achieve physical recovery.

We ask a sponsor to help us through all three levels of our program of recovery: physical, emotional, and spiritual. Find a sponsor who has what you want and ask that person how they are achieving it.

Meetings give us an opportunity to identify our common problems, confirm our common solution, and share the gifts we receive through this Twelve Step program. In addition to face-to-face meetings, OA offers telephone and other types of virtual meetings that are useful in breaking through the deadly isolation caused by distance, illness, or physical challenges.

Many members call, text, or email their sponsors and other OA members daily. Telephone or electronic contact also provides an immediate outlet for those hard-to-handle highs and lows we may experience.

Writing our thoughts and feelings down or describing a troubling or joyous incident helps us to better understand our actions and reactions in a way that is often not revealed by simply thinking or talking about them.

We read OA-approved literature, which includes numerous books, study guides, pamphlets, wallet cards, and selected Alcoholics Anonymous texts. All this material provides insight into our disease and the experience, strength, and hope that there is a solution for us.

Creating an action plan is the process of identifying and implementing attainable actions to support our individual abstinence and emotional, spiritual, and physical recovery. This Tool, like our plan of eating, may vary widely among members and may need to be adjusted as we progress in our recovery.

Anonymity assures us that only we, as individual OA members, have the right to make our membership known to others. Within the Fellowship, anonymity means that whatever we share with another OA member will be respected and kept confidential.

Any form of service—no matter how small—that helps reach a fellow sufferer adds to the quality of our own recovery. Members who are new to OA can give service by attending meetings, sharing, and putting away chairs. All members can also give service by putting out literature, welcoming newcomers, hosting a virtual meeting, or doing whatever is needed to help.



THIS MONTH IN A.A. HISTORY

*** NOVEMBER ***

- ◊ **November 1, 1963**—Reverend Sam Shoemaker, the rector of Calvary Church in New York City, co-head of the Oxford Groups in America, and early friend to A.A., died.
- ◊ **November 1, 2001**—First of 400,000 Fourth Edition Big Books arrived in the mail.
- ◊ **November 3, 2001**—JP M., author of the screenplay of "The Days of Wine and Roses", a haunting tale about a couple that slides into alcoholism, died at the age of 81. He was quoted as saying he was a "big boozier" who had been helped by A.A.
- ◊ **November 11, 1934**—Bill W.'s final drunk began on Veteran's Day (known then as Armistice Day) and lasts about a month. He would be hospitalized for the last time in December.
- ◊ **November 15, 1949**—Bill W. suggested that groups devote Thanksgiving week to discussions of the Twelve Traditions.
- ◊ **November 16, 1950**—Dr Bob S., A.A.'s co-founder, died in Akron, Ohio.
- ◊ **November 18, 1946**—first Dublin, Ireland A.A. group met.
- ◊ **November 26, 1895**—William Griffith W. (Bill W.), co-founder of A.A., was born in East Dorset, VT.
- ◊ **November 1934 (exact date unknown)**—Ebby T., who got sober via the Oxford Group, visited a drunk Bill W. and carried the message. During their talk, Bill realized that he can chose a God of his own understanding, rather than one prescribed by any church, to aid in his recovery, and the seed was planted.



Sam Shoemaker
1893-1963

I Stand By the Door

by Sam Shoemaker

I stand by the door.
I neither go to far in, nor stay to far out.
The door is the most important door in the world -
It is the door through which men walk when they find God.
There is no use my going way inside and staying there,
When so many are still outside and they, as much as I,
Crave to know where the door is.
And all that so many ever find
Is only the wall where the door ought to be.
They creep along the wall like blind men,
With outstretched, groping hands,
Feeling for a door, knowing there must be a door,
Yet they never find it.
So I stand by the door.

The most tremendous thing in the world
Is for men to find that door - the door to God.
The most important thing that any man can do
Is to take hold of one of those blind, groping hands
And put it on the latch - the latch that only clicks
And opens to the man's own touch.

Men die outside the door, as starving beggars die
On cold nights in cruel cities in the dead of winter.
Die for want of what is within their grasp.
They live on the other side of it - live because they have not
found it.

Nothing else matters compared to helping them find it,
And open it, and walk in, and find Him.
So I stand by the door.

November 2023 South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 <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) 	2 <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) 	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 AM Sunrise (AA) 12:00 PM Fellowship Nooner (AA) 	4 <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
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