



News Sheet

Issue: Apr/May 2020

Coronavirus (Covid-19) brings challenging times to our Fellowship

TRADITION ONE – OUR COMMON WELFARE SHOULD COME FIRST; PERSONAL RECOVERY DEPENDS ON A.A. UNITY.

In March 2020, the Irish Government announced specific restrictions around social distancing measures in a bid to help combat the spread of the Coronavirus COVID-19 in Ireland which led to some confusion amongst some areas of the Fellowship on whether Groups should close their meetings. A decision to close groups, on a temporary basis, was necessitated by the Government's directive. Meetings in Ulster/Northern Ireland, were also temporarily closed following the UK Government's directive.

Government and Health Service Executive advice, in relation to the coronavirus (COVID 19), is being regularly monitored.

The AA website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie has proved to be an important aid in providing regular updates to the Fellowship, especially during these exceptional times.

Groups, Areas, Intergroup officers, in fact, all levels of the AA Structure that are issued with official AA Mailboxes are encouraged to access their mailboxes too for regular updates.

This News Sheet is intended as an aid to Service in AA.

The views and opinions expressed in the News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland.

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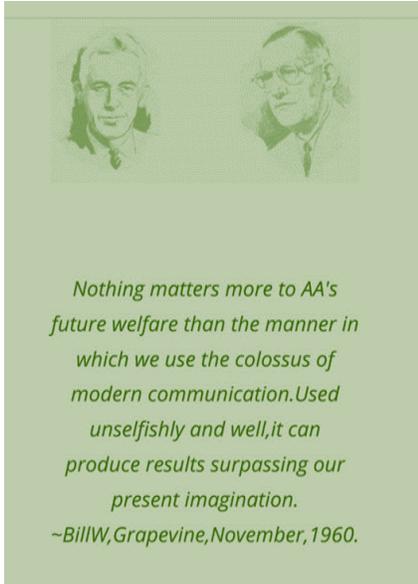
PREAMBLE ©

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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Postponed and cancelled AA Meetings

A decision was taken on 24th March 2020 to suspend the 'Find a Meeting/Plan your Meeting' section on the website as accuracy of the information displayed could not be guaranteed.

Groups that had to temporarily close their meetings due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) can be assured that their information is NOT removed from our database, it was made inactive and will be activated again in due course.

Tradition Four. "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole."

Online Meetings Social Media Platforms and Social Networking Sites

We are conscious that there are many alternative ways to keep in touch and, indeed, to hold virtual meetings e.g., WhatsApp Zoom, Skype, etc.

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Ireland, without instruction from Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference of Ireland, cannot endorse these online meetings. However, given the ever-increasing requests from AA groups during these challenging times, it has been decided to introduce AA Meetings online. This is an acknowledgement and does not constitute an endorsement. Only Conference can ratify and endorse these changes. This will be brought to Conference at the first opportunity, when the current COVID-19 emergency has ended. There are strict guidelines in place for groups wishing to avail of this service and these will be fully enforced at all times. These steps are necessary to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of members wishing to attend.

The personal anonymity or confidentiality of those attending online meetings or using other media platforms may not be protected.

Please go to the Updates Section of the website for further information.

What can we do, as individuals, to make a difference in AA during these unprecedented times?

Consider the isolated alcoholic who may not have access to these media platforms. Please reach out to members in your locality to let them know that we are still here for them.

AA telephone services could consider extending their hours as a way of reaching out .

There is a current list of telephone services on the website, if these telephone services are in a position to extend their availability, just notify GSO, via the relevant AA mailbox and the information will be updated.

You might take this opportunity to share your experience and write an article for the Road Back magazine, AA's sharing magazine. How did you cope? What you do to stay sober? How were you of service to others in these unprecedented times for AA?

These are challenging times for everyone and cooperation and unity is needed now more than ever.

"I am Responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."

Online Meetings Ireland - 6/4/2020

The website was updated with 'Suggested Guidelines for Groups to hold Online Meetings' and included necessary steps to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of members wishing to attend, and to preserve the precious unity of the fellowship which we all work so hard to maintain.

This acknowledgement is our effort to accept all who seek the hand of AA, and to unite us in our common purpose, and not divide us in our differences.

A Temporary Registration Form for AA Ireland Meetings Online was introduced to facilitate groups that want to include their online meetings on the website. Certain checks and balances were included to ensure that only groups registered with GSO and approved within the Structure of AA could be included.

General Service Office (GSO)

GSO continues to provide a range of services to members and the public. Staff are now working from home and are connected remotely to the workstations in the office.

There has been little interruption to service. Literature orders can still be placed with GSO and we will endeavour to fulfil those orders as soon as possible when the Governments directives are updated accordingly.

'And People Stayed Home'

And people stayed home
and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped
and listened deeper
someone meditated
someone prayed
someone danced
someone met their shadow
and people began to think differently
and people healed
and in the absence of people who lived in
ignorant ways,
dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
even the earth began to heal
and when the danger ended
and people found each other
grieved for the dead people
and they made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways of life
and healed the earth completely
just as they were healed themselves.

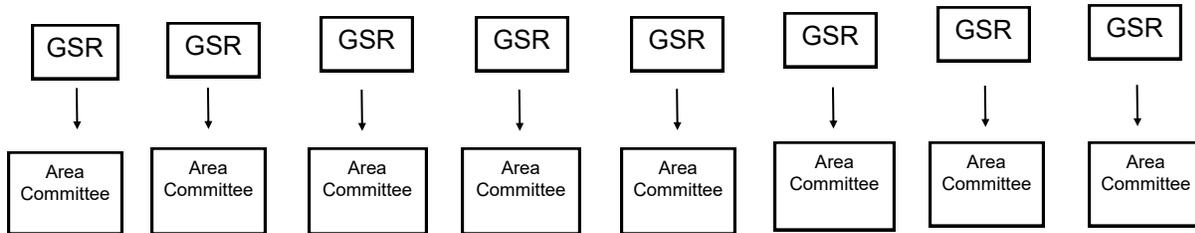
Credit 'Poem by Kitty O'Meara'

STRUCTURE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

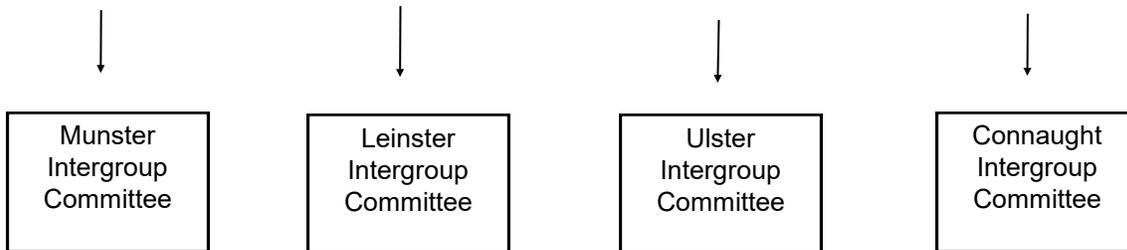
AA GROUPS (G)



TWO GSR's FROM EACH GROUP FORM AREA COMMITTEE



FOUR MEMBERS FROM EACH AREA COMMITTEE FORM PROVINCIAL INTERGROUP COMMITTEES



FOUR DELEGATES FROM EACH PROVINCIAL INTERGROUP TO GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE



All Ireland Convention 2020

Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

CANCELLED

See our website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie

For details of forthcoming events in Ireland and abroad (when available)