



NEWS SHEET

Dec 2011/Jan 2012

“This News sheet is intended as an aid to service throughout the Fellowship in Ireland”

Twelve Tips for Staying Sober Over Christmas

Christmas without alcohol may still seem a dreary prospect to new A.A.s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest Christmases of our lives sober—an idea we would never have dreamed of, wanted, or believed possible when drinking. Here are some tips for having an all-round ball without a drop of alcohol.



1 Live up with A.A. activities for the holiday season. Arrange to take new comers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.



2 Be host to A.A. friends, especially newcomers. If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee.



3 Keep your A.A. telephone list with you all the time. If a drinking urge or panic comes—just pour everything else until you've called an A.A.



4 Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations

given by groups in your area, and go. If you're fluid, take someone newer than you are.



5 Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about. Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.



6 If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an A.A. with you, keep some candy handy.



7 Don't think you have to stay late. Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.



8 Worship in your own way.



9 Don't sit around brooding. Catch up on those books, restaurants, walks, and letters.



10 Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations. Remember—"one day at a time."



11 Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy. Maybe you cannot give material gifts—but this year, you can give love.



12 "Having faith o . . ." No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.

We wish our members everywhere a lovely Christmas and all happiness in the New Year.

How do I carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic through my home group?

First, and most important, is to make the newcomer or the still-suffering alcoholic feel welcome at the meeting. Meet them at the door with a warm welcome and friendly greeting and introduce them to others. Listen to them before and after the meetings; get to meetings early, leave late, offer rides and make a point of shaking hands and telling them we are glad to see them. We offer them tea or coffee and literature. We celebrate their anniversaries and we welcome them back. We ask them to join us after the meeting, and offer transportation, if needed.

Show up regularly to show that the message works. Offer to sponsor people or identify those willing to be sponsors and show them that it is a "we" program. We set a good example by being involved in Alcoholics Anonymous. We participate by working the Steps and practising the Traditions. We remember that it takes time for a newcomer to feel welcome. We talk one-on-one and bring the newcomer to meetings with us.

Through sharing we try to help them identify and look for the desire to stop drinking. We keep our sharing interesting and brief. We share positively with newcomers and talk to our sponsors about negative experiences. We invite them to share on topics, teach them about the First Step and help newcomers to understand the Traditions. When no-one has a topic for discussion, we might discuss a Tradition. We regularly take a group inventory to check how we are doing, if we keep the message of AA clear, and to identify areas that need work. We adhere to the Steps and Traditions, and assume responsibility for group health. We remember that it is a program of attraction rather than promotion.

Offer newcomers service positions and encourage them to participate in our group activities, including business meetings, and talk about the structure of AA.

Self Supporting

The home group is the place where service starts; the group can create many opportunities for service, such as sponsorship, holding regular monthly business

meetings, asking for coffee commitments and group chores, such as clean-up volunteers.

Other opportunities for service include repairing or improving meeting space, being courteous to meeting place neighbours and landlord, offering transportation to meetings, and inviting newcomers for social time after meetings. Encourage newcomers to help with clean-up and other tasks to become a part of the group. Experienced group members take new members to service events, educate them about the legacy of service, and pass on service literature.

Self-supporting includes money, time, and effort; it is about more than just money. Self-supporting requires commitment, showing up, leading by example, and behaving responsibly. The responsibility of self-support can be reduced to two words, "Group and Example" – everyone in a group can have a job. Each member should be made to feel that they have the right to participate, rather than only being told they have a responsibility.

The word "service" may be a barrier to some getting involved. We need to emphasise how contributions of time and effort add to self-support, that there is a need for time as well as money. Length of sobriety does not exclude self-support responsibility. Folks need to be informed of service responsibilities and not be given jobs that they may not be qualified for or ready for. It's hard for many of us to get new members interested in service; we need to remember Rule 62 and have common sense.

Talk about participation and encourage representation at all service levels. We can also consider the notion of self-support in relation to challenges some members face. For example, women members with children and no babysitters – one group got together to solve this challenge by women members rotating care-taking so members in this situation could attend meetings.

Some groups use blackboards and calendars to identify service opportunities, or share about meetings with other groups. Core members voice service opportunities; sponsors encourage service participation. One-on-one communication can not be replaced, even in this modern world. We give it away to keep it, and giving it away through service is fun.

Serenity Prayer

The origin of the Serenity Prayer has long been a topic of discussion among AA members. Many know the origin, but as the years pass it is of use to all members to have a review. It was shortened from the original version, which was actually some lines of a longer prayer written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr of the Theological Seminary Union, New York City. Two years after Dr. Niebuhr had written this prayer, Dr. Howard Robbins, asked permission to use the lines in a book of prayers he published in 1934.

It came to the attention of an early member of AA in 1939, when it appeared in The New York Times. He liked it so well he brought it to the Vesey Street Office to show Bill Wilson. After Bill and the staff read the little prayer, they adopted it in a slightly shortened

version. It fitted the AA need perfectly. Cards were printed and passed around thus the simple prayer became an integral part of the movement.

The original version, as written by Fr. Niebuhr, is "God give me the serenity to accept the thing which cannot be changed: give me the courage to change the things which must be changed: and the wisdom to distinguish one from the other."

However the version, or whatever the origin, as voiced daily by thousands of Alcoholics living the AA way, gives words to the prayer within the hearts of these men and women for serenity, courage and wisdom to retain sobriety these twenty four hours. Here is a long version;

God take and receive my liberty,
My memory, my understanding and will,
All that I am and have He has given me,
**God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.**

Living one day at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace,
Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to his will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy in the next.

AMEN

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
NEWS SHEET

Conventions Ireland

Galway West Area 6-8 January 2012
Galway Bay Hotel, Galway.

Waterford Area 20-22 January 2012
The Majestick Hotel, Tramore, Co. Waterford.

Limerick Area 3-5 February 2012
The Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick.

One Day Events Ireland

Tyrone Area Day of Gratitude
Saturday 21st January 2012
Selverbirch Hotel, Omagh.

Conventions Abroad

Lanzarote 27-29 January 2012
Barcelo Hotel, Costa Teguisse, Lanzarote.
www.aalanzarote.com

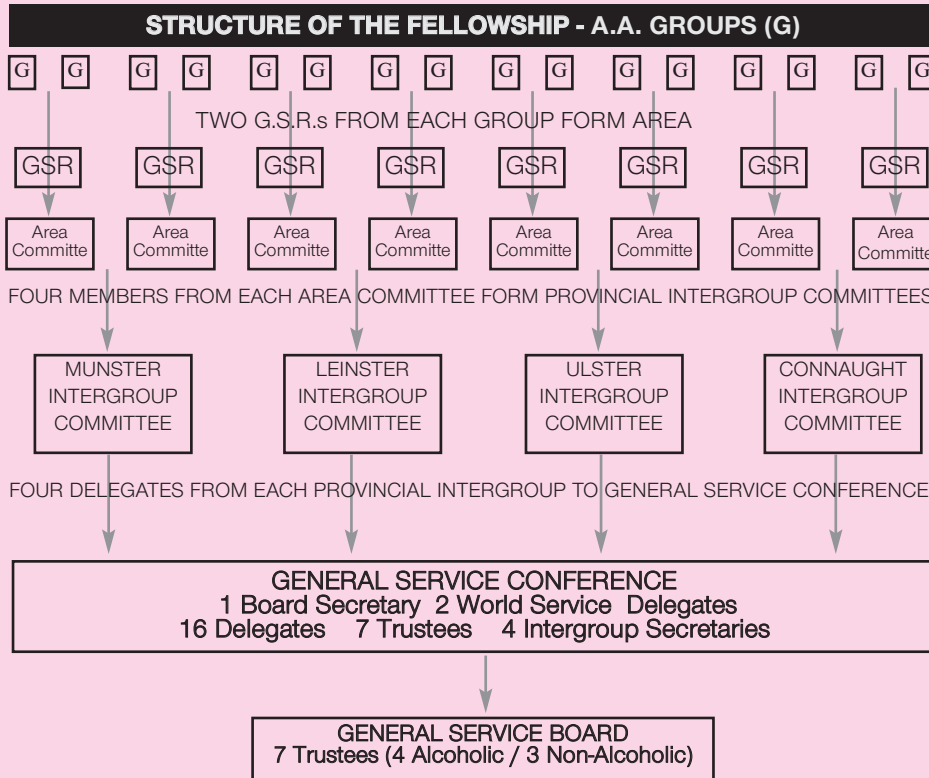
Thailand 24-26 February 2012
The Montien Hotel, Pattaya, Thailand.
www.aathailand.org
www.aakorea.co.kr

Greece 17-20 May 2012
18th International Convention,
Vravona, Attica, Greece.

55th All Ireland Convention - Theme 'Comes of Age'

20th - 22nd April 2012 Green Isle Hotel, Naas Road, Dublin.

For further information contact: General Service Office, Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9.
Tel: 01-8420700, email: gso@alcoholicsanonymous.ie, website: www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
For bookings contact: Green Isle Hotel, tel: 01-4593406, email: sales@greenislehotel.com



"The views and opinions expressed in the News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Fellowship as a whole"
Published by The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous of Ireland, Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park,
Swords Road, Dublin 9. Telephone: 01-8420700, Fax: 01-8420703,
E-mail: gso@alcoholicsanonymous.ie Website: www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie