

News Sheet



Dec 2019/Jan 2020



*Wishing you all a Happy Christmas
and a Sober, Prosperous New Year*

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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Some tips to help ensure a Sober Holiday Season...

Plan Ahead

Always take your own vehicle to holiday parties so YOU can control your destiny. Also, take a sober companion with you for support and pay close attention to relapse triggers: H.A.L.T: Hungry. Angry. Lonely. Tired. Arrive early and leave early.

Make Self-Care a Priority

Celebrate the holiday season by taking care of your body, mind, and soul. We cannot be our very best if we are depleted. Give yourself the gift of time for yourself: an acupuncture treatment, a yoga class, time for meditation, and prayer. Proper nutrition and plenty of healthy physical movement will make you feel stronger, both physically and emotionally. Make plans for a **renewal retreat** after the hustle and bustle that will soothe your soul.

Increase Support

We can get overwhelmed with the erratic nature of the season, so as you plan each day start with 12-step support as your first priority. This could mean bookending a holiday event with phone calls to someone in AA before and after the event. Commit to attend a meeting (or two) each day and inviting a friend to attend with you. Also, if you're traveling to another city, plan ahead and make sure you attend meetings there as well, or pick up a phone meeting.

Be mindful of time spent around your relatives – know your limits

We all have our own version of crazy Aunt Mildred who is going to criticise your career choice and make you feel "less than" or

Uncle Harry who will insist on you having his famous holiday drink. And even worse, we most likely have strained family relationships that have been simmering for years. This type of stress can lead us to rationalise and convince ourselves we are entitled to a drink. Instead, surround yourself with supportive loved ones that will help you follow the steps to staying clean and sober.

Have your props ready

When you arrive at a party, immediately get a non-alcoholic beverage and keep it in your hand. Whether it's sparkling water or soda, others won't be inclined to push drinks on you constantly. And, the truth of the matter is, people never really notice or pay attention to what's in your glass.

Celebrate relationships

As you consider holiday occasions, think about them as a way to make new friendships and perhaps rekindle old relationships with friends. Instead of making the event about drinking and eating as a priority, intentionally make it about "people" and building relationships; go into each party looking forward to establishing real connections.

Eat well

The holidays don't give us a green light to overindulge. There's nothing worse than stuffing ourselves with too much sugar, carbs, and fat-laden foods that make us feel bad. So be proactive and choose healthy foods that will make you want to celebrate, not feel guilty.

Service, not self

When we can focus on others, we find more joy and gratitude. So look for ways to think about and serve others. Make a special family recipe and deliver to friends. Donate your time at a homeless shelter, food pantry,

The Man on the Bed

This full colour painting first appeared as a Grapevine centre spread in the December 1955 issue. It proved so popular that four colour prints were made available separately. The artist, Robert M., was a volunteer illustrator for the Grapevine, and in 1956 he presented the painting to AA co founder Bill W. In his thank you letter Bill wrote: "Your representation of 'The Man on the Bed' hangs in my studio at Bedford Hills.... The whole heart and essence of AA can be seen by just looking at it."



or soup kitchen. Spend time with a neighbour who is confined. These spiritual opportunities allow us to spread happiness and cheer to others. Treat it as one of the benefits of staying clean and sober; being able to have a clear mind and body to help others.

Create new traditions

Celebrate the fact you are re-establishing your own life. As you affirm your new self on these festive days, you are choosing to celebrate the new, better, clean and sober life that you have created. This might mean hosting a sober, festive gathering with friends in recovery. It may mean volunteering to serve at local 12-Step support groups. Remember, giving is one of the best things you can do during the holidays.

Avoid relapse triggers

Of all triggers, the most significant can be emotional triggers. No matter if you are in recovery or not, the holiday season is one of the most stressful times of the year. With so many activities squeezed into one month, our normal routines get disrupted and people get frustrated and anxious. Also, there's increased demands from your spouse, partner or other family members, and this can put serious stress on your sobriety.

This can lead to feelings of shame, guilt, humiliation, embarrassment, anger depression. The holidays don't have to be "perfect" and just like previous years. Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Saying "no" is perfectly acceptable and it will protect you.

Make sobriety your top priority

If you think about it, all holiday parties are optional. If you don't think the activity is going to be good for your recovery, it's okay not to go. You can politely decline the party invite, but make a lunch date with the host for another day.

Maintain your spirituality

Our commercial world wants us to believe that joy can come from tinsel, booze, and shopping. It sells us the lie that happiness can be found in these. Instead, focus on the true spirit of the season. Regardless of your faith or spiritual beliefs, the holidays are really about two things: giving and gratitude. When we focus on these, the other things such as resentment, disappointment, anger, worry, self-loathing show up far less often and cannot find a foothold in our hearts.

Remember....'One Day at a Time'

You can visit our website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie for details on AA meetings and nationwide telephone services in operation over the holiday season.

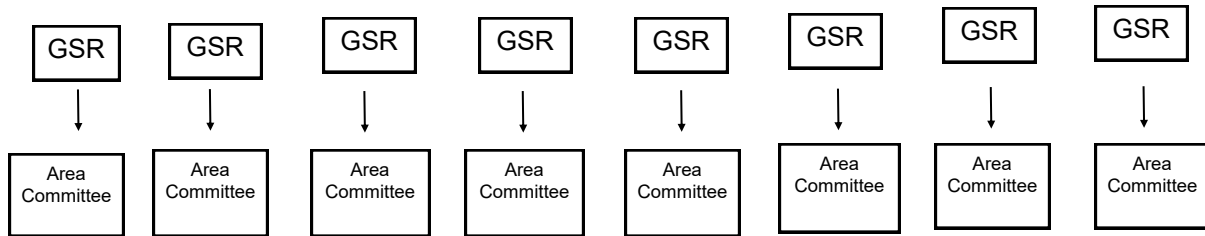
This News Sheet is available to view and download through the AA member's area of the website. All groups, Areas etc. that received their respective AA mailbox login details will also receive a copy by email.

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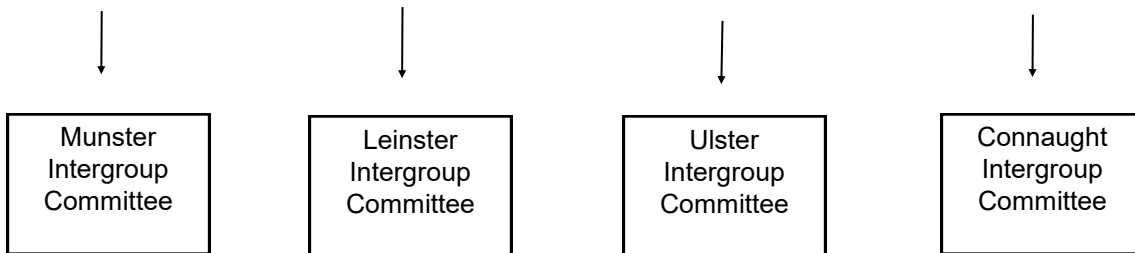
AA GROUPS (G)



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
Friday 17th to Sunday 19th April 2020
Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

See our website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
for a full list of forthcoming events in Ireland and abroad.