

THE ROAD BACK

includes Service News

JAN - APR 2024
ISSUE NO. 444



GRATITUDE

Editorial

Here we are again Jingle bells and hoo hoo hoo but a memory and we would hope that there are no ill effects from overindulgence in the culinary delights made available to us over the festive season.

Most important of all it would be great if sobriety was maintained through this wonderful fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, with that thought in mind let's look at our theme for this issue of Road back "GRATITUDE". This is something we hear regularly at AA meetings throughout the world. I'm sure gratitude is something we could all speak about in many different contexts "I'm grateful for being sober", "I'm so grateful I found this fellowship". The list is endless for things an alcoholic should be grateful for, one of the ways we express gratitude is by giving away what was freely given to us i.e. we carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic, we share our experiences at meetings, we work one to one with the newcomer and the people we sponsor, for me one of the greatest acts of gratitude is the smile and the outreached hand to someone who at that time may be feeling the nip of the emotional wringer.

For our next issue of the Roadback we have chosen "SERVICE" as the theme, so this is a great opportunity to put our gratitude into action by telling us about your service in AA.

It is also a challenge to us to look at service.

Do you attend group conscience?

Does your group have a group conscience?

Do we feel the group is run by an individual therefore starving newcomers and others of entering the service arena?

The Road Back is a great platform for experience to be shared and new ways of learning from others.

Questions I feel I should be asking myself about service, "do I have a service sponsor?". That sponsor may be someone different from the person that sponsored us through the recovery programme.

Yes, my fellow travellers the challenges are many.

But the future of our fellowship depends on our gratitude put into action, so let's get pen to paper and write our experiences to:

roadback@alcoholicsanonymous.ie

Road Back Team



UNITY | SERVICE | RECOVERY

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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 AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation 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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GETTING SOBER IN PERTH

My name is Clifford and I am an alcoholic. I celebrated 9 years of sobriety in January 6th just past. When I came into the rooms, I was not in a celebratory mood. I got sober in Perth, Western Australia, when I walked into the rooms of a well known meeting, known as the 'monastery meeting'.

The stories in the big book tell of low bottom and high bottom cases. Initially alcohol took a lot from me; dignity, loss of relationships, jobs, poor health and homes.

This time around when I came into the rooms, I was a high bottom case. I had more money, new friends, good job and lots of sunshine, yet I felt a low I never felt before and realised, I can't do this, I can't drink and I can't do it on my own.

Afraid to live, scared to die, I walked into the rooms, although the faces and accents differed from home (a few Irish to be found mind you!) the people were welcoming. They told stories like mine and some even worse, yet most seemed happy. I felt fearful, distrusting,

that something was up. They maybe wanted something from me yet when the meeting ended they asked for nothing and said to come back. I did, and after a few days, I met the man who became my sponsor.

We spoke after a meeting late at night. He lived a different life from me, he came from Kenya, settled in Australia. I remember he had a glow, a presence. He said he used to have everything materially and he had nothing. Now in his life, he had very little but because of AA, he had EVERYTHING!! He had so much hope and believed his life was getting better and better. He said I could have this too. I wanted it and he became my sponsor. He gave me my first experience of the 12 step programme. I made AA my life.

I have long since come home and found AA in Ireland which I love. When I left to travel Australia, I really wanted to change my life. Little did I know, it would be in the rooms of AA where this would take place.

Clifford, Northern Ireland



KEEP COMING BACK

In my search to find some inner peace
I cried for things that never ceased
To slip away as if unleashed
For I couldn't see what I had got
And I wouldn't thank you for my lot
So help me God for I had naught

And I said goodbye for I couldn't bear
To hate you all and I can swear
I sought no love amongst you there
For fear and pride would not relate
The misery of my lonesome fate
In truth to tell the darker trait

And I said goodbye some time ago
For I feared you were my very foe
And blamed you in confusion so
So I wouldn't meet the people there
When I needed help and couldn't share
With the one who comes anew in there

Should I go away and not return
I cannot live of life unborn
I'd look on you with endless scorn
And never see I was to blame
When I cried for things that never came
To feed my ego with the same

But I made the road back to meet you there
And by your love I was aware
You had the peace I'd hope to share
And know myself why I did cry
And come to see the reason why
I left you once and said goodbye

Charlie R, Larne

...once a psychic change has occurred, the very same person who seemed doomed, who had so many problems he despaired of ever solving them, suddenly finds himself easily able to control his desire for alcohol, the only effort necessary being that required to follow a few simple rules.

Doctor's Opinion xxviii



AT OUR AA MEETING LAST NIGHT

At our AA meeting last night, we discussed and shared about the alcoholic not wanting to communicate with other people. It is a large factor and ingredient in my alcoholism.

I remember each year around St. Patrick's Day how I came to find Alcoholics Anonymous. I also make myself share about it as I feel that in doing so, I am acknowledging the help of my 'Higher Power'.

It was the night before St. Patrick's Day and I was drinking in a pub called the "Ivey Leaf". It was in Parnell Place Cork. It no longer exists. I was the proverbial unwanted 'hanger-on' at the edge of a jolly crowd and somehow, I was included in the rounds. I had pretended to know one of those who had money to spend.

My next memory is of seeing a bunch of shamrock that somebody had left on the counter. Without thinking I put it in my pocket. I do recall at one stage in the night being afraid

to leave my place at the counter to go to the toilet in case I was forgotten about when the next round was bought. The fear of being without a drink (refill) kept me standing at the counter while I urinated in my trousers.

Fast forward to the next surviving memory: I woke around 4am on St. Patrick's morning. I discovered that my hand was locked around the bunch of shamrock and I realised that I had prayed to the shamrock before falling asleep.

My prayers were answered and I found myself in Patrick's Hill AA meeting a fortnight after St. Patrick's Day with gratitude.

Anon, Cork

**WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!
SEND YOUR STORIES, POEMS OR FAVOURITE IMAGES RELATING TO YOUR
SOBRIETY TO:
ROADBACK@ALCOHOLICSANONYMOUS.IE**



My name is Ronan, I am a grateful recovering alcoholic sober by the Grace of God working through the 12 step program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The days roll into weeks, roll into months, roll into years... roll into days... thank God I am many days sober, and while I've made a lot of mistakes and paid the emotional price of doing things were suggested not to do and failing to do things were suggested to do, I have consistently attended meetings and ask God each morning for a daily reprieve from alcohol and give thanks every night for another day sober.

I have oft-times heard it said at AA meetings: "A grateful alcoholic won't get drunk".

I need the 12 step program, with meetings, in times of defeat and victory, whether it was facing bereavement, grief and disappointment or the euphoria of celebrating great sporting victories in huge stadiums or the sense of achievement in graduating from university in recovery and indeed the joy of getting married and becoming a father.

Sobriety always has to be the foundation of my life or I could again face 'the four hideous horsemen' in the bottle - 'terror, bewilderment, frustration and despair'.

I recall in my early months in Bristol, where I got sober, going into a Saturday morning meeting and a member asking me, "Well, how are you?" My reply, "My head is melted!" (in

other words, in pain!) to which he responded, "You should be grateful to be sober."

I said, "I am grateful to be sober but my head is melted!" It was a day of great emotional pain, perhaps the growing pains of recovery but through the grace of God and prayer and sharing with other alcoholics we can get through these times while not losing gratitude to be free from alcohol and the squalor and despair that goes with it... This Too Shall Pass. Ernie C (RIP) an enlightened member from Belfast, used say: "Honesty gets us sober, gratitude keeps us sober."

I recall as well, it used to be more suggested at meetings 'cultivate an attitude of gratitude'. On my knees, I thank God for five things at the start of my morning prayer. Often they are the same, freedom from alcohol and the hell that goes with it, my dear family, wonderful supportive friends inside and outside of AA and food and shelter. When self pity and problems come along, I have written a gratitude list, five soon stretches to ten and more. The 12 step programme has given me freedom, my self-respect and dignity in my own community and an opportunity to serve others and enjoy life.

To God and AA I am truly grateful.

Yours in fellowship,

Ronan, Tyrone

WITH GRATEFUL THANKS

My name is Adele and I am a very grateful recovering alcoholic. I am celebrating three years of sobriety in two days time, and that is truly amazing for someone who couldn't leave the wine alone for three hours. These days, I do not need to drink, but definitely so need the hand off AA to help me to keep sober and to keep grounded in what could happen if, for one moment, I tried to maintain my sobriety on my own.

I was a late starter to alcohol at the age of 32. In fact, in my earlier life, I actually detested alcohol and looked down on those I met who lost control when drinking. My higher power, who I choose to call God, certainly held a card hidden up his sleeve in order to teach me a lesson. My life became totally unmanageable, and no matter how hard I tried, I could not escape the horrible alcoholic prison that I had created for myself. I told myself all kinds of lies, "I am a heavy, but normal, drinker", "I can stop if people would just leave me alone and stop preaching". It was always everyone else's fault, and never mine. My days were held together by vain attempts to achieve control over my drinking, and then ending in shame and a sense of hopelessness. I couldn't look anyone in the eye, and this included me looking at my own reflection in the mirror. My sister had died tragically, on her own, through chronic alcoholism, but still I continued for two more years. By the time that I walked into my first meeting, I knew that I was fighting for my life, and I very much wanted to live. I know now that I had accepted Step One, that my life had become unmanageable. The love and acceptance that I found at that meeting was

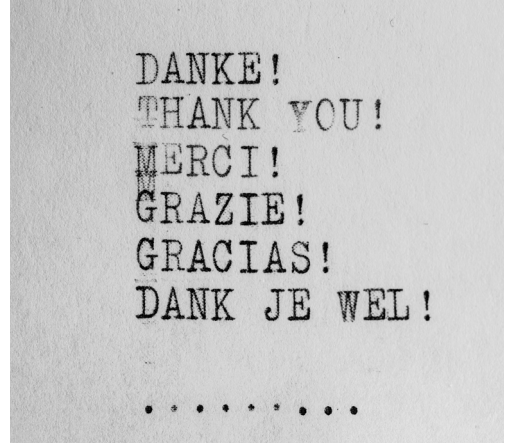
unconditional, and something clicked in my exhausted brain. I had totally thrown in the towel. I left the meeting in a daze, but with no hope and an invitation to 'keep coming back'.

That's exactly what I did, and my life began to change in so many positive ways. In this current situation with the corona virus affecting our lives in sad and cruel ways, my gratitude is tenfold. I know that I would have been taking huge risks in order to obtain the alcohol I required. I am privileged to carry out phone service for AA, and my heart goes out to the still suffering alcoholics who ring the Helpline.

For all that I have received from this truly wonderful Fellowship, I am truly grateful.

Thank you for keeping me sober.

Adele, Sandhurst Newcomers



For further information on forthcoming AA Events please visit the events section of our website on: www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie/events



GRATITUDE SHOULD GO FORWARD

"Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward".

In other words, if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given you.

No satisfaction has ever been deeper and no joy greater than a Twelfth step job well done.

To watch the eyes of men and women open with wonder as they move from darkness into light, to see their lives quickly fill with new purpose and meaning, and above all to watch them awaken to the presence of a loving God in their lives – these things are the substance of what we receive as we carry AA's message. 1 letter 1959, 2 Twelve and Twelve p110

AN ALCOHOLIC

*Darkness, dreams, despair, a soul thats sick,
a body wracked in pain, a swallow slaked
the armpit of a desert Arab.*

*There is a mouse with the whiskers of a witch
and eyes like saucers shining in the night
taunting, teasing, tantalising
a ten pound note in torn, tattered shreds
between his teeth*

*A chink of morning light, a sparrow's chirp, a chime.
Dear God, another dawn, another day
of living leper's Hell
a slave beneth the lash of lethal loathsome alcohol
a blacked out brain a drink that's hid
but where?*

*Frantic, fruitless search with hands that shake and belly gawks
faceless frightening fears, asylums strange and priosn cells.
Tis here, the warm feel of bottle glass
the liquor, like a railroad train on a single track
goes on and on and on and on.*

Submitted by Vincent, Raheny



SO MUCH GRATITUDE

A recent topic meeting at Prahran, online due to lockdown, began with a speaker sharing his story of all for which he was grateful after 30 years of sobriety. Marinated in the beautiful shares of that meeting, I am moved to write about it for "The News". As a member of AA from Grand Isle, VT in the US, it was worth getting up at 5.00 AM to Zoom in.

My story of gratitude began when a friend asked if I would go to an AA meeting and I said yes. I know now that my willingness to go was the first gift of the program, my higher power nudging me toward hope and healing.

When I went to the 8.00 am Saturday meeting, I was expected to find what I thought of as "losers". What I found instead was an, the invitation to honestly tell the whole story of my obsession with drinking which I had tried very hard to keep secret the morning drinking, drinking and driving, hiding my drinking, the anxiety over when and where I would get my next drink, the resentment and desolate isolation, the slow but steady incineration of my life. I told it all. And the response was love, identification and support that can only come from another alcoholic. At that first meeting I received the gift of quick friendships, my first big book, and a solution.

Then I asked for help by asking a member to be my sponsor, which has become one of the most important relationships I have ever had. Through the 5th step, I could "look the world in the eye". My spiritual experience began. I found that the solution to my alcoholism was actually a journey of healing, from being a shell of a person filled with self-hatred to having compassion and love for myself because I had discovered a Higher Power who loves me. I

was only able to discover this because of what you taught me and the love you have shown me in Alcoholics Anonymous. The 'design for living' turned out

to be a door that if I was willing to go through it, I would be shown how to be 'happy, joyous, and free'. This was the gift you gave me. And yes, for this I am deeply grateful. Turning the pages, a bit, we all found ourselves cast into the era of covid, and AA went viral. I had no idea my AA experience would be turned upside down and be rooted in a new land across the globe. I believe that the events that led me to become an early morning person eventually turn that time into an investment in Melbourne AA meetings was a gift from my Higher Power.

As you know, farmers usually have early morning chores, and I am a farmer. When my wife broke her foot, I had to get up at 3.00 AM to do the chores so I could make it to my off-farm job by 7.00AM. The pattern stuck, and I came to relish the wee hours of the morning for prayer, reflection, sitting on the tailgate of my truck out in the pastures. On one of those early mornings after covid hit, I got the urge to find a zoom meeting somewhere in the world where English was spoken. I thought, 'what about Australia?' I came across the 'meetings up next' page on the AU AA website. That discovery has been a fateful one and has transformed my recovery.

When I landed at the 'Mid-Week Chat' meeting in Hampton, I knew I had found an AA home away from home, I had found 'my mates'. Since then, I have attended many Melbourne meetings, chaired one for some months, and have found my daily Aussie meetings to be a vital cornerstone to my programme of recovery,



why? Because you have the richest, wisest, most honest, most loving, and most grateful brand of AA I have experienced. I decided I want what you have, so I keep coming back. So, I am deeply grateful to have the privilege to attend meetings in Australia, and especially in Melbourne. You have given me so much, taught me so much. What began as a miraculous lifting of my obsession with alcohol has become a life

in which I can go a day without a drink, but not a day without a meeting in Australia before the dawn.

Thank you so much. And as 'Capt K' always recommends, I think I'll keep coming back.

Adam F, Reprinted from *The News*

MY NAME IS JAMES

My name is James and I'm an alcoholic. Although I've been saying that now for such a long time, it's still important for me to say it every day in order to remind myself of who I am and where I came from. I'm first out of the bed each morning to draw the curtains and look out at the day regardless of the weather, especially here in the west of Ireland, I connect with my higher power, and it lifts my spirit – not every day but most days. My gratitude list is long, with the bottom line always being grateful for being sober and the top line has my family who forgave me and still have me in their lives. They said a grateful alcoholic will never drink and I believe that today.

I loved alcohol, it was an essential part of my life and I thought that was normal. I drank every day and, in the end, I even left hospitals to go for a few drinks. I started drinking young with my pals, and I kept drinking until there was no one who could tolerate me in the end. The progression of my disease brought me to a place where I lost everything including hope. I woke up one morning after 3 days in bed, in a dark room, seeing and feeling things that belonged in horror films. An idea slipped into my mind, maybe go to a meeting. I was in a terrible state, I had tried everything, I had even tried Alcoholics Anonymous twice before.

I knew most of the members at that meeting The Abbey in Galway, I knew their drinking,

they looked well, they spoke well and they dressed well. They gave me tea in a polystyrene cup and after the meeting they invited me to a hotel for more tea. There was nothing inside me, except a permanent shake and buzzing in my head. I could smell myself detoxing, yet embarrassed as I was, I couldn't refuse them, and they kept inviting me to more meetings and more tea.

Now I go to meetings three times a week in order, to serve my primary purpose, which is "to stay sober and try to help another alcoholic". Try is a very important word for me. I believe that I must give this away in order to keep it. Over time, I learnt to be kind to myself and take it easy, to practice patience and forgiveness. Practice is the key.

I love the wisdom in the rooms, I hang around with members who laugh lots while living sober, helping others, correcting mistakes made and saying sorry when its warranted. The programme gets stronger the more I practice it.

The price I pay for my sobriety is inexpensive and really very simple, "I go to my meetings, I stay away from the first drink, and I do the best I can" and with an open mind I can fit the entire 12 step programme into that statement.

James OS, Galway

A FULL AND THANKFUL HEART

BY ANN

My name is Ann, I am an alcoholic. I am sober today by the grace of God and Alcoholics Anonymous 12 step recovery program. This is the central fact of my life.

Today my smartphone tells me I have been gifted 5799 days sober. To my mind that amounts to 5799 miracles, since that at the end of my drinking I was a daily drinker.

When I was living in the problem, I couldn't see the problem. My alcoholism was of such a gradual onset that I was blind to it for such a long time. By the time I realised my drinking was not normal, I made up my mind to sort the problem out. I was convinced I could do this since I believed I was relatively successful in all other areas of my life. Over a long period of time, I tried many methods of control, there was always "one more attempt and one more failure" Over time the periods of sobriety were getting shorter and further apart. Eventually I needed to drink every day. These failed attempts eroded all my confidence and self-respect. I felt a total failure. In my life I had been blessed with a loving family, caring friends, a good career and plenty of material success, all of which I had taken for granted. Now I felt unworthy of it all. I felt my drinking was all my fault and it terrified me. What was to become of me? I was consumed with shame. One morning, I don't know why, I realised I was never going to stop drinking without help. That morning, for the first time in my life, I asked for God's help, by 11.30am I was standing in an AA room at my first meeting. I firmly believe it was as a direct result of Divine intervention. That was the last day of my old life and the first day of my new life. I was told at my first meeting that if I asked for God's help every day

and thank Him at night, I would be ok. This I started to do and my compulsion to drink was taken away and until today, not returned. To me this was miraculous, since I had been a daily drinker. I didn't know it then, but that was the beginning of a personal relationship with my Higher Power.

In the early days of my recovery, at meetings I was very nervous and reluctant to share. I thank God for the generous sharing of others. By listening and through time I was able to identify and begin to "fit in" in our fellowship. Although it was a while before I understood the exact nature of the illness and was able to "admit to my innermost self that I was a real alcoholic", I stayed close to AA in those early days. Thank heavens for repetition in AA, I was a bit of a slow learner.

I know I owe my recovery to other's 12 step work in many many ways. Our program of recovery was put in print in New York 1939. Over 3000 miles away and 69 years later I was given the gift of that exact same 12 steps of recovery. This was made possible by the thousands of men and women, who over the years and over the miles, carried the message all the way from Bill W and the first 100 to me. And by our 12 Traditions, preserved the integrity of Alcoholics Anonymous. We owe every one of them a great debt of gratitude. Had it not been for them AA may have been lost along the way and I would not be sober today.

This recovery program has given me much more than sobriety. I feel this sober life is like stepping into reality. I didn't realise that I had only been half living, I had never really been



comfortable with responsibility, never really giving of myself to others, I had always been reluctant to step out of my comfort zone. I know now that is "bondage of self". Today I can do the mature things I had always avoided. My very good supportive friends in the fellowship and especially my homegroup show me by their example how to live life on life's terms. I had always tried to find solutions by myself, now I have the ability to ask for help and advice. I don't have to know everything. A very strange thing has occurred, today I am able to admit when I am wrong. A line in a little prayer I have been given reads "Lord teach me the glorious lesson, that occasionally I may be mistaken" I can never say that prayer often enough.

My meetings are very important to me, thankfully I've never wanted to step back from them. At them I learn how others live our program and it's where I can sometimes be of service to others. At first, I came to get, today I come to give. Every day is a school day in AA, I'm always learning, always trying to live better. It is my belief that in AA we become the

person our Creator intended us to be.

Today I have a full and thankful heart. I appreciate all the things in my life that I had previously taken for granted.

I want this more today than when I arrived. I now know I have an illness that will kill me, I will have it always, but I know I don't have to suffer the symptoms of this illness if I keep spiritually well. I know my recovery is a God given gift, a gift I never want to let slip through my fingers. I am confident that I am in the care of my Higher Power and if I perform His work well, I can stay in a "position of neutrality, safe and protected"

For that I am eternally grateful.

I trust that if I do today what I did yesterday I will have a good tomorrow.

Ann



Heard at Meetings

Why settle for relief when what you really want is freedom

There's no harm in having nothing to say. Just try not say it out loud

Definition of forgiveness: giving up hope for a better past.

Alcoholics are the only people who need a pole vault to get over an anthill

Let go or be dragged.

Only an alcoholic would believe that the solution to loneliness is isolation.

Service News

JAN - APR 2024

Hi, and welcome to the spring edition of Service News. As you may know, this year's Annual General Meeting of Conference was held in the Carlton Hotel, in Santry from 8th to 10th March 2024. We will include some of the information from this meeting in this month's issue. A full copy of the draft minutes of the meeting will be available on the website around the end of April. But before we outline what happened at Conference, there are a few exciting items happening in GSO which we would like to tell you about.

Big Book

Some of you may be aware that there is currently a 5th edition of the Big Book being developed. This is being published by World Services in the United States, however, this is unlikely to be available in print this year. In the meantime, we have made numerous efforts to source the current 4th edition of the Big Book at the best possible cost so that it can be made available to the members of the Fellowship for the lowest possible price. For this reason, we have changed our suppliers. While we used to purchase the Big Book from World Services in the USA, we are now importing them from the General Service Office in Great Britain. We have been able to achieve a substantial saving by doing this which will be passed on to the members. It means that despite costs increasing globally for paper, printing and freight, we will be able to continue to offer the Big Book for sale for €10.

Just For Today card

We have had numerous queries over the years about reducing the size of the Just For Today card. Many members found it a little bit big for their wallets. It seemed to get damaged very easily for those who like to carry one on their person. For this reason, we have produced a credit card sized card. It will neatly fit into

your wallet in a card slot. We hope that this alleviates the problems experienced in the past.

Company AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous clg. took place on 22nd February 2024. All of the members of the company, who are essentially the Conference members, were invited to attend. Last year's accounts were presented by the auditor, who also answered numerous questions about the accounts. He said that the finances of AA are in a healthy position at the moment. A full copy of the audited accounts will be available on the website over the coming weeks.

At this meeting, we were very sad to see the departures of two of our Trustees.

Cindy O'Shea has served as a Non-Alcoholic Trustee for the last 4 years. Her input into various and important aspects of the work of the General Service Board has been invaluable. We will feel the benefits of her involvement for many years to come.

Martin C. rotated out of his position as Munster Trustee after completing his four year term. Martin has served the Fellowship for many years in various capacities including Trustee, Intergroup Secretary and GSCD. He was responsible for setting up our current Phone Responder system in GSO. We thank Martin for his many years of Service.

At the same meeting, we welcomed three new Trustees.

Kenny P. was welcomed as the new Ulster Trustee. Kenny replaces Seamus B. who resigned last year.



Tony O’C. has been appointed as the new Munster Trustee, replacing Martin C.

Maire McGrath has been appointed as a new Non- Alcoholic Trustee.

Conference 2024

As you may know, this year’s Annual General Meeting of Conference was held in the Carlton Hotel in Santry in early March. We will have more detailed information for you in future issues of this publication, but here are a few of the highlights.

In total this year, we had 20 individual motions sent forward for discussion and decision at Conference – 12 of these motions were proposing to rescind a 1989 Conference decision that stated “The General Service Conference of Ireland does not approve of specialist meetings which might exclude or might appear to exclude any individual who has a desire to stop drinking”.

This topic has been discussed extensively over the last 12 months following a similar motion which was before Conference last year. After much discussion and debate on the day, Conference decided to rescind the 1989 decision, by a two thirds majority. This means that, according to Article 10 of our Conference Charter (Page 59 of our Service Handbook, 2023 edition), that “All items or motions passed by a two-thirds majority are recommended and unless rescinded by notice of motion, become Conference policy after the expiry of one year”.

In real terms, what this means is that in 12 months’ time, GSO will be able to publish identifiers on the website for various different types of meetings, including men’s meetings, women’s meetings, LGBTQ meetings, etc.

While these meetings have already existed for many years, we were unable to publish them on the meeting finder on our website, due to the

previous 1989 motion. This will begin to happen in March 2025, unless there is a further motion to Conference next year which challenges this decision, and is successful.

It is worth noting that a meeting or group, even if it identifies as a specialist/special interest meeting, must still adhere to the 6 criteria listed on page 14 of the Service Handbook which are.

1. All members of a Group are alcoholics, and all alcoholics are eligible for membership.
2. As a Group they are fully self-supporting.
3. A Group’s primary purpose is to help alcoholics recover through the Twelve Steps.
4. As a Group they have no outside affiliation.
5. As a Group, they have no opinion on outside issues.
6. As a Group, their public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion and they maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, T.V. and films

Other interesting decisions made at Conference include;

- A. It was decided to translate the first 164 pages of the Big Book into Irish and to make it available in pdf format.
- B. A GSR pack is to be produced and made available to groups/areas. This will provide information about what is involved when becoming a GSR.
- C. A comprehensive report was prepared and agreed relating to “why we are a company?” and “why we are a charity?”.

This topic has caused a lot of confusion over the

years. This report, which will be available on the website in the near future, explains exactly why we are both a charity and a company limited by guarantee.

D. Conference also agreed to produce new Public Information posters which were brought forward by the National Public Information Subcommittee. These will also become available over the coming months. This is some of the exciting work that this subcommittee has undertaken in recent months.

General Service Representative (GSR)

'The strength of our whole AA service structure starts with the Group and with the General Service Representative (GSR) that the Group elects. I cannot emphasise too strongly the GSR's importance' (Bill W).

Duties and responsibilities

The GSR as the Trusted Servant of both his/her Group and Area Committee, participates in discussions and decision-making at Area level according to his/her wellinformed Conscience. She/he will carry the views of his/her Group to Area and report back to his/her Group at their next Group Conscience meeting, being careful to include brief details of all discussions and decisions taken at the Area meeting.

From Area meetings and from the reports of other officers the GSR will become familiar with what is happening throughout the structure of AA.

The GSR also brings Group donations to Area, where appropriate, and returns receipts to the Group treasurer.

As far as possible he/she should attend all Area meetings and all Group Conscience meetings (business meetings) of his/her Group. The GSR should hold no office in any other Group.

Qualifications

The GSR must be an active member of his/her delegating Group, and preferably have at least two years continuous sobriety.

He/she must enjoy the confidence and trust of his/her Group. He/she should be familiar with the programme and Traditions of AA, and the basic AA literature. He/she should be willing to place Principles before Personalities.

How GSRs are chosen and their term of office Each GSR is elected by his/her Group Conscience. Where possible, there should be two GSRs for each Group, with one being replaced by election each year. The GSR's term of office is two years.

Group Autonomy

Tradition 4: Each Group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other Groups or AA as a whole. With respect to its own affairs, each Group should be responsible to no other authority than its own Conscience. When its plans concern the welfare of neighbouring Groups also, these Groups ought to be consulted. No Group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect AA as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues, our common welfare is paramount.

Group Responsibility to AA as a whole

The continuing survival and welfare of Alcoholics Anonymous, its three great legacies of Unity, Recovery and Service, are the concern, and indeed the responsibility, of every individual member and Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. The AA Groups assumed full responsibility for the Fellowship in 1955 when "AA Came of Age". The only way we can discharge this responsibility is through Group Conscience in the Group and the collective Conscience of the fellowship (the AA service structure).

Consequently, we ought to continue to make



our Groups aware of the need for a responsible Group Conscience, (the sole authority) in the AA Group, our service structure, their duties and responsibilities for AA as a whole.

Responsibilities of individual Group members

In AA individual freedom is of the utmost importance. For example, any alcoholic is a member the moment he/she says so. We cannot remove his/her right to belong, neither can we put pressure on any of our members to believe or say anything. Ours is indeed "a large charter of minority privileges and liberties". Of course, this freedom brings responsibilities, and members are individually and collectively responsible for carrying the AA message to the still-suffering alcoholic. Sobriety - freedom from alcohol - through the practice of the Twelve Steps is the sole purpose of the AA Group. We must confine our membership to alcoholics, and we must confine our AA Groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone. Care should be taken to preserve anonymity and not to use the name of AA with outside agencies, particularly Courts, Social Services etc." (Extract from Problems other than Alcohol)

What meetings can a Group have?

Our Fourth Tradition says that every AA Group is autonomous "except in matters affecting other Groups or AA as a whole", so a Group can hold practically any kind of meeting they choose.

The most common kinds are:
Ordinary AA meetings (Closed)
Step and Tradition Meetings (Closed)
Group Conscience Meetings (Closed)
Group Inventory Meetings (Closed)
Open AA Meetings
Open Public Meetings

Where a meeting is designated "closed" the meeting is for AA members only. An agreed statement on personal conduct and appropriate behaviour at AA meetings is contained in Appendix 3 (Page 70 of the Service Handbook, 2023 edition). Copies of this statement are also available free of charge from GSO and from the members' area of our website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie



OBSTACLES TO GRATITUDE

"I'm grateful to be sober, and I'm grateful to be grateful." Grateful to be grateful? You bet! For me to have this kind of gratitude means I need to put some serious work into recognising and removing any obstacles to it. Here's a list of seven obstacles to me becoming grateful and staying that way:

1) Amnesia

I suffered amnesia when excessive alcohol consumption gave me memory loss. Alcohol can disrupt or block my ability to form memories of facts and events when I get drunk. I used to have 'blackouts', which are episodes of alcohol-induced amnesia while drinking. Without memory there can be no healing because I won't rightly know just how grateful I should be for unremembered protection, favours, blessings, benefits and benefactors. Self-awareness lies at the core of me experiencing gratitude and listening to AA members reminds me of things to be grateful for.

2) Arrogance & Pride

If I assume and take it for granted, I'm better than others then it will mean I've forgotten the times of receiving God's grace which protected and strengthened me. I'll end up wallowing in miserable ingratitude. Arrogant behaviours and haughty pride will prevent me realising what a profound blessing it is to be alive, sober, contented and safe. My unwarranted pride must be overcome through Step 4, followed by Step 5 with my sponsor, and then regularly practicing Steps 6, 7 and 10. Gratitude is impossible without humility and self-knowledge.

3) Conceit & Vanity

My sobriety was hard won. But I mustn't deceive my heart by vainly imagining that my blessings came from my own superior wisdom and virtue. The greatest reward for my sobriety

is freedom, which means freedom from the indulgences of conceit and vanity. Both these defects emphasise separateness and distinction from others. Because I am a person who needs people, I can't presume superiority over anyone. If my happiness depends on me admiring myself, I'll 100% never have gratitude - I must cultivate a sense of oneness with life and my fellows.

4) Entitlement

Feeling entitled means I have an exaggerated sense of significance and deservingness. This shows up as a need for admiration and approval. People with a strong sense of entitlement have unreasonable expectations and believe they deserve special treatment and special favours. If I believe the universe owes me everything, why should I be grateful for it? To avoid having entitlement I need honest self-reflection, a dose of humility and a recognition that life owes me nothing. I must respect, value and care about others, and practice compassion towards them.

5) Resentment

Resentments arise after someone wrongs, attacks, cheats or hurts us. Resentment is a poison not just for others, but for me. Grudges and resentments are powerful barriers to gratitude. I hate having feelings of injustice, unfairness and victimhood, and desires to retaliate. Vengeful resentment must be replaced by thankfulness. I can't be simultaneously grateful and resentful. Can I be free of self-condemnation and possibly look at those who arouse resentment as teachers and guides? Humility and forgiveness are essential for replacing resentment with understanding, kindness, and a sense of detachment and acceptance.



6) Self-centredness

Self-centredness and self-importance are all about how I feel and whether I'm pleased, looked after and appreciated. Self-absorbed people need to satisfy their own self-seeking motives and think that by expecting everything and owing nothing they have no reason to feel thankful. Aiming for humility is a key to swapping self-centredness with gratitude because it requires me being interested in others. In humility I become aware of my limitations and my need to rely on people. If I'm humble, I can acknowledge that life is a gift worth being grateful for.

7) Self-pity

Some people feel worry, disappointment, frustration, anxiety, shame and more, and become so negative they see absolutely no hope. How can I know if I'm like that and if my self-pity is justified? Am I restored to sanity? I need Step 2 of the AA program. My circumstances mightn't be as bad as I think.

Paying attention to life's positives trains me to see more of them. My sponsor told me the antidote to self-pity is gratitude, and gratitude is built on knowing the truth about how good life is now.

it took me a bit of time in early sobriety after the fog lifted before realising my own recovery and wellbeing were worth being grateful about. But my feelings of gratitude couldn't become consistent until I started using my AA program to clear away all the obstacles. Now with quite a few years of continuous sobriety, I live an untroubled life where being happy day-to-day is linked to the blessings of gratitude. Happiness won't always make me grateful but having gratitude will make me happy.

Anonymous, From AA Reviver



Humour



- ## THE TWELVE STEPS
1. I can't
 2. God can
 3. Let God
 4. Look within
 5. Admit wrongs
 6. Ready self for change
 7. Seek God's help
 8. Become willing
 9. Make amends
 10. Daily inventory
 11. Pray and meditate
 12. Give it away



"If she drank like that for twenty years, she must have a fantastic plastic surgeon."



SO MUCH TO BE GRATEFUL FOR

Why do I feel like this? What is wrong with me? Just a couple of the questions I asked myself regularly throughout my life. I just couldn't understand why I felt and behaved so differently to everyone else. I always had this sense of impending doom; this negative way of thinking which affected my life to a massive degree. I never felt safe and felt like everyone around me wasn't safe either. Every night I would pray to God begging him to keep me and my family safe. The fear as a child was intense and it followed me through my whole life.

I grew up around a lot of alcohol and although it caused problems, I couldn't wait until I could have a drink. At the age of seventeen, I was hooked on the feeling that it gave me, all my fears and self-doubt disappeared. It made me feel good about me.

As the years progressed, so did my alcoholism. I was so blinded by my disease that I was unable to see the damage I was causing to myself and others around me. The social services made the decision to remove my two wonderful sons from my care, I wasn't fit to look after them. I couldn't understand why everyone was out to get me, no one mentioned drinking, just my 'lifestyle'. I blamed everyone around me. Poor me. The longer I would stay in this hellish vortex, the more I lost of myself. I became homeless at times; my anger was out of control, and I continued to drop to lower lows. Then I heard of Cuan Mhuire. I first willingly entered rehab in 2017, two years later I was back, begging for help.

I first entered Alcoholics Anonymous in November 2019 and the wonderful people of A.A welcomed me with opened arms, I finally found my safe place. At that first meeting, I

heard people speak about the importance of God, a sponsor and for the program, I couldn't stop crying, I needed to get a sponsor as soon as possible, I knew deep down that if I didn't do what these people suggested, I was going to die! I was ready to do whatever it took to get sober, so I asked a very kind lady to be my sponsor as soon as the meeting was over.

Over my almost four and a half years in Alcoholics Anonymous, I have come to discover what is wrong with me, I have an illness which centres in my mind, to which the solution is the recovery program, service and constant thought of others. I was guided by my sponsor through the program and introduced to a beautiful God who forgives me and who understands me. I don't feel odd or different anymore, I have found like-minded people, and we help each other, it's a marvellous fellowship.

As we worked through the program, I began to become aware of my defects and shortcomings and became willing to work on them. Good things began to happen, my children were allowed to come back to live with me, I got a new home; I started my new job and began a course, and I had peace of mind for the first time in my life.

Then in February last year I found out that I had cancer. I was back on the emotional rollercoaster, I found that anger at God had slipped back into my life, my disease had me exactly where it wanted me. Impending doom and negativity fed the beast. The wonderful people in the fellowship walked through it with me, always a constant support. I have made friends for life in AA, the most meaningful relationships, with love and honesty. God had rescued me from hell, this was nothing in



comparison! I felt the power of God working in my life, even when I didn't want it. Thankfully my life was spared again, but I am under no illusion that without God, the recovery program, and fellowship, I would never have survived it sober.

mirror is priceless. As long as I keep doing what I am doing on a daily basis, I have a daily guarantee that I won't pick up a drink for that day and that day is all I have anyway.

Kellie, Dunganon

I am forever grateful to have the privilege of sobriety, the freedom to wake up in the morning and be able to face myself in the



DAILY REFLECTION - MARCH 25TH

I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heartbeat must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion that we can ever know.

AS BILL SEES IT, p. 37

I believe that we in Alcoholics Anonymous are fortunate in that we are constantly reminded of the need to be grateful and of how important gratitude is to our sobriety. I am truly grateful for the sobriety God has given me through the A.A. program and am glad I can give back what was given to me freely. I am grateful not only for sobriety, but for the quality of life my sobriety has brought. God has been gracious enough to give me sober days and a life blessed with peace and contentment, as well as the ability to give and receive love, and the opportunity to serve others—in our Fellowship, my family and my community. For all of this, I have "a full and thankful heart."

THE BENIGN ANARCHY

The simplicity in how AA works from a spiritual viewpoint and from a practical standpoint make it a unique fellowship for me as a recovering alcoholic. I feel a well of gratitude and very much privileged to have been gifted with this way of life that has maintained and sustained me for over four decades without a drink or a mind altering pill or substance.

I'm not sharing my sense and experience in AA to defend or acquit this fellowship. AA per se does not need me or anyone else to do that. The AA structure based on the inverted pyramid model, where the groups hold final say and sway in its determinations is indeed an inspired and, dare I say it, a revolutionary one.

AA is often referred to as 'the benign anarchy' and we can see why.

Problems that arise in AA are invariably of the personality type where egos can lose sight of the simple principles that underpin our traditions, our concepts and warranties.

Our legacies of service are often compared to the legs of the old milking stool. Remove any one of them and the stool can no longer function.

Unity, recovery and service are the lynchpins of our structure.

Where on earth can one find an organisation that holds no threat of sanctions over its members?

No member can be suspended or have their membership cancelled. Not to mention that we have already precluded ourselves, in any event, from keeping records of members anyway.

Crucially we are self-supporting. Thus we are beholden to no external sponsor, be it governmental or some other vested interest.

The 'power greater than ourselves' as per our own conception to which we establish an integral relationship maintaining and developing same according to the experience, strength and hope of the first 100 members or so who left us the legacy of the AA programme of recovery.

Our preamble makes us helpful in our welcome to the suffering alcoholic yet threatening to no one.

We neither endorse nor oppose any causes. Our preamble is a digest of what we do and don't do. Consisting of the most salient sentences, the preamble is the answer that saves us from controversy and indeed from ourselves.

There is no mention of a punitive, fear-instilling god in our literature.

Tradition two gives mention to 'a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants.' This 'Higher Power' is that 'one ultimate authority' for me.

Though here we too can be ego sick and driven by notions of power, selfishness, prestige interests. When blindly unconscious we fail to allow that loving God to express Himself in all our affairs we inevitably find ourselves headed for trouble. As the dictum from the orient puts it 'clarity of thought, purity of motive and integrity of action'. Such principles as espoused by our own programme essentials need to be given primacy in our dealings and decision making.



Our steps have a spiritual rationale to them as was explained to me by my own sponsor. The reasoning here is not that we be sainted but that we be relieved of the bondage of self. By this we mean the egoic selfish self that will even try to veil a bad motive with a good one (12 & 12) Requiring us to be in 'constant vigilance' as to our motives. Is our primary purpose permeating our doings... is this essentially about carrying our message to the alcoholic who still suffers, both within and outside of our AA rooms? Holding fast to this purpose how can we fail?

We pray in intimacy to the core concept that we hold precious both in the third and seventh step prayers that we can be enabled to get out of our own ways in order that this greater 'Good' be allowed manifest in our lives and in how we serve others.

We do.. for unselfish doing's sake, as love is its own reward. We are not in this for self aggrandizement; for perpetuation of our image or memory. Always we AAs learn that it must be principles before personalities.

Even Conor F who was been attributed with bringing AA to Ireland realized that he was just another 'link in the chain'... (see talk of the same title by fellow member T.H.) Conor was forever quick to attribute the aforementioned momentous fact and privilege to his own home group back in Philadelphia.

Love and tolerance is our code (BB)

My sponsor suggested to me that I make AA the most important thing in my life and all else would fall into place. Only where I have made other things matter more have I suffered. Our BB suggests that if we make our spiritual recovery paramount the other facets of our recovery will fall into place. It is also said that having one primary, fully dedicated aim in life sees all other subordinate aims somehow being satisfied also.

Anon, Ireland



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
**67th All Ireland
Convention**
SERVICE WITH A SMILE 😊

19th – 21st April 2024

**In the
Tullamore Court Hotel**

For hotel accommodation contact
Tullamore Court Hotel,
O'Moore Street, Tullamore,
Co. Offaly, R35 D406, Ireland.
Tel: +353 (57) 934 66 66
Email: hello@tullamorecourthotel.ie



For more information, please email:
allirelandconvention@alcoholicsanonymous.ie
Updates will be made available on
www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie nearer the event
Hosted by Leinster Intergroup on behalf of the General Service Conference of AA in Ireland



UNITY | SERVICE | RECOVERY

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

67th All Ireland Convention

19th – 21st April 2024

SERVICE WITH A SMILE 😊

Tullamore Court Hotel
Tullamore, Offaly R34 D406

Meetings and Events:

Early Bird Meeting

Thursday 8.30pm

Registration

Opens at noon on Friday

Convention Opening Meeting

8.00pm Friday

Music- Open Mic sing-song and fellowship

From 9.30pm Friday

Events/ Workshops – Saturday

12.00pm Public Information Presentation

2.00pm Greet the Board

3.00pm Recovery Countdown meeting

4.00pm Finding your voice- 'The Road Back' writing workshop

5.30pm Can I mention this Mum? - two generations in conversation, unveiling our primary addictions.

Marathon Meetings

Friday from 2.00pm–10.30pm

Saturday 10.00am–11.30pm

Open Public Meeting

8.00pm Saturday

'The Dance Party'

Saturday from 9.30pm

YPLO Room– Saturday

A room of activities, boardgames and fellowship

10.00am Guided Meditation

11.00am Draw your higher power

12.00pm & 2.00pm Yoga with Kylie

9.00pm Big Book Trivia Quiz

YPLO Room– Sunday

10.00am Breathwork with Wim Hof instructor- 'The Wolf'

Yoga and breathwork will be limited spaces and on a first come basis, please bring a yoga mat

Convention Closing Meeting

11.00am Sunday

Limited 10% discount- Early-bird registration available allireland24.eventbrite.ie
Register on arrival for €15 per person, all events included.



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.

www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie



67TH ALL IRELAND CONVENTION

The committee have been working behind the scenes to try and make this year's convention in Tullamore something that is that little bit different yet has appeal to all of our members.

Our overall theme this year is Service with a Smile, which we felt was a nice reflection on how we like to do and see our members do service. Hopefully, we will see lots of smiles all weekend!

We will keep most of the traditional format including marathon meetings, with themes that we hope you will find interesting. We will have our opening meeting in the ballroom on Friday night along with an Open Public Meeting on Saturday night.

In between these we have very active participation from our National Young People Liason Officers, who have many activities planned all weekend.

We are also planning to have lots of workshops, a breakout area, greet the Board, Public and National Public Information, a count up and countdown. Entertainment wise, we are planning a sing song on Friday with our some of our talented members, so feel free to bring along your instruments. On Saturday in the main ballroom, after the Open Public Meeting we will have entertainment that we hope will appeal to you all.

Keep spreading the word – we hope to see you all there starting with the Earlybird's meeting on Thursday, with the official convention kick off from Friday 19th April until the closing meeting on Sunday Morning.

YPLO AT THE ALL IRELAND CONVENTION

Young Person's Liaison Officer (YPLO) is a new service position borrowed from the UK structure and agreed at 2021 Annual GGeneral Conference with the primary aim of attracting young people into service. There are currently four officers, one for each province of the country and we are very excited to attend and actively participate in the 67th All Ireland Convention 2024. As well as taking part in the marathon meeting schedule for the weekend, YPLO will have a designated space where we will facilitate a range of exciting activities and workshops covering areas of wellness, creativity, and socialisation within a recovery setting. This will provide a space for people (particularly young people) to come together and learn from each other's experience and strength. Our hope is that young people can experience and witness the positive opportunities that can exist for recovering alcoholics in AA in a fun and relaxing environment while connecting with peers. YPLO officers will be present for the weekend, and we would love to see you there.



WHY I FEEL GRATEFUL

As I sit here in the meeting room, surrounded by individuals who understand the depths of struggle and the journey towards healing, I am overwhelmed with gratitude. Gratitude for the opportunity to be here, to share my story, and to listen to the stories of others who have walked similar paths.

Being a member of Alcoholics Anonymous is a blessing that has transformed my life in ways I could have never imagined. As I reflect on my journey, I am aware of the countless ways AA has changed my life. I am grateful for so many different aspects of AA.

First and foremost, I am grateful for the gift of sobriety. Before finding AA, my life was a chaotic, ruled by alcohol. Every day was a battle against my addiction, a battle that I often felt I was losing. But AA showed me that I wasn't alone in my struggle and that recovery was possible. With the support and guidance of fellow members, I have learned to live one day at a time, embracing sobriety as not just a goal, but a way of life.

In AA, I have found a community unlike any other, a community built on acceptance, understanding, and unconditional love. From the moment I walked through the doors of my first meeting, I was greeted with open arms by people who knew exactly what I was going through. There was no judgment, only empathy and compassion. In AA, I found a family, a family bonded not by blood, but by a shared desire to overcome addiction and live a life of meaning and purpose.

I am grateful for the fellowship of AA—a fellowship that extends beyond the walls of our meeting rooms and into every aspect of my life. Whether it's a phone call from a fellow member checking in on me or a coffee date with a friend from the program, I am constantly reminded that I am never alone on this journey. Through

the fellowship of AA, I have forged deep and meaningful connections with people who truly understand me, people who have become my pillars of strength and support.

Moreover, I am grateful for the wisdom and guidance of my sponsor. From the moment I asked them to be my sponsor, they have been by my side, offering me their experience, strength, and hope every step of the way. They have helped me navigate the challenges of early sobriety, guided me through the Twelve Steps, and encouraged me to confront the underlying issues that fueled my addiction. With their unwavering support, I have grown in ways I never thought possible, gaining insight into myself and finding the courage to face my demons head-on.

But perhaps most importantly, I am grateful for the hope that AA has given me—the hope for a better tomorrow, filled with endless possibilities and the promise of a brighter future. In the rooms of AA, I have seen countless miracles unfold—people who were once lost in the depths of addiction finding redemption and reclaiming their lives. Their stories inspire me to keep moving forward, to never lose faith in myself or in the power of recovery.

In conclusion, the gratitude I feel for being a member of Alcoholics Anonymous is immeasurable. AA has given me the tools I need to live a life free from the shackles of addiction, the support I need to weather life's storms, and the hope I need to keep moving forward. For that, I will be forever thankful.

Anon, Dublin



MY GRATITUDE LIST

grateful for

reason

grateful for

reason

grateful for

reason



The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
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.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
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 and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.



The Road Back Editorial Team would love to hear your stories, snippets of AA humour, amusing anecdotes overheard at meetings, maybe you have some AA cartoons.

Email articles to roadback@alcoholicsanonymous.ie or post to the General Service Office.



Up to date information on forthcoming AA Events can be viewed on our website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie