

News Sheet



December/January 2015

*The Happiest of Christmases
and the brightest of New Years
to each and everyone of you
from all of us at GSO.*



Image courtesy of The Grapevine, Box 459

Twelve Tips on Keeping Your Holiday Season Sober and Joyous

Holiday parties without liquid spirits may still seem a dreary prospect to new A.A.s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays 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



Line up extra A.A. activities for the holiday season. Arrange to take newcomers 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—postpone 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 timid, 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, museums, 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 had a . . ." No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.

The Gratitude Attitude

Bill W. emphasized the notion of “the full and thankful heart” as a necessity for contented sobriety.

While the beatitude of gratitude is surely a God-given grace, nevertheless our AA promises state that all of these things will materialize if we earnestly work for them.

The practice of making a regular gratitude list is just one of the very many suggested practices that springs to mind.

The prayer of St. Francis which incorporates so much of what our program is about, also clearly states that it is in giving that we receive.

We ‘alkies’ know that our real happiness is in making happy and being happy - for such is the rhythm of life. When we see our loved ones happy we are infected with the reflection of it. When we see the life of a suffering alcoholic transformed with the aid of our privileged intervention, the joy that wells up in us is beyond telling.

We know more so than most that it is in losing ourselves in twelve step work, in all its forms, that we find our true fulfilment.

The simple principles that our program distills are invariably about being relieved of the bondage of self. Our Third Step is a decision. The implementation of this lies in the continuation of the process outlined in the remaining steps.

The perpetuation of our own self aggrandizement is totally incompatible with the stated objective of our spiritual program of recovery.

In essence we recover from our “old self”.

The “old self” got us drunk and kept us that way. We hear in the rooms that we either “grow or go”. We cannot stand still for too long and rest on our laurels. We progress or regress. Thus the need for the growth of the “new self”. Butler Yeats puts it well... ‘change is neither this nor that but simply growth. We are happy when we are growing’.

Meetings are the communal platform through which we commonly help ourselves and our fellow alcoholics who share our desire for recovery.

Christmas is a season for giving. Our own recovery is testament to those members who gave of themselves so that we might enjoy the gifts of sobriety. Our primary purpose is to safeguard this precious gift of sobriety and help other alcoholics to achieve it for themselves.

“Blow, blow thou Winter wind... thou art not so unkind as man’s ingratitude” (Shakespeare). Sometimes the inverse works, especially if we look at all the things that we could have... but don’t have.. particularly active alcoholism with all its travails.

We know that we cannot dress ourselves in the sobriety of another alcoholic... it would be a counterfeit. We have to grow our own recovery. This involves the steps outward for the help we need - to meetings and workshops to build and grow our legacies of recovery, unity and service. It also involves the steps we take inwards to grow in contented sobriety.

Prayer and meditation are the spiritual tools that are suggested towards this end. The Christmas season allows us ample opportunities to pull away from the hustle and bustle and retreat to quietitude.

Prayer without works is dead. Dr Bob paraphrased our program with the words “Love and Service”. We, therefore, need to act ourselves into right living!

We lot are surely gifted by the network of meetings and gatherings at our disposal, locally, nationally and internationally not to mention the reservoir of AA resources available to us via the internet.

Our NEW freedom and our NEW happiness is promised and AA does deliver. The miracle of contented sobriety is guaranteed “one day at a time” ... 98% of success is in turning up!

At AA meetings we often hear the words “the grateful alcoholic won’t drink”. We also know that if we want to feel great... we need to feel grateful.

“Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

May God bless you and keep you - until then.”

P164 The Big Book

FORTHCOMING CONVENTIONS IRELAND		
DATES	AREA	VENUE
8th-10th January 2016	Galway West Area Convention	The Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill, Galway. Theme: 'I am Responsible'
4th-7th February 2016	Limerick Area Convention	The Castletroy Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Limerick. Theme: How Grateful Are You
11th-13th March 2016	Cork City Area Convention	The Ambassador Hotel, Military Hill, St. Lukes, Cork. Phone: 021-4539000. Theme: "Happy, Joyous & Free"
27th-29th May 2016	Cork County Area Convention	The Charleville Park Hotel, Limerick Road, Charleville, Co. Cork
FORTHCOMING CONVENTIONS ABROAD		
DATES	COUNTRY	VENUE
22nd-24th January 2016	53rd New Zealand Convention	Copthorne Resort, Waitangi, Bay of Islands. www.aaconvention.org.nz
5th-7th February 2016	27th North Sea Convention in Belgium	Vayamundo De Kinkhoorn & RAVELINGEN - Zeedijk 290-330, 8400 Oostende, Belgium
24th-27th March 2016	1st Australasian Convention in Fiji	Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji. www.aanatcon.org.au
ONE DAY EVENTS		
DATES	AREA	VENUE
Sat. 28th November 2015	Belfast Area Day of Gratitude	Corr's Corner Hotel, Belfast
ALL IRELAND CONVENTION 2016		
15th-17th April 2016	59th All Ireland Convention	Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. Hotel - 057 9346666. Theme: The Joy of Living.

The News Sheet is intended as an aid to SERVICE throughout the Fellowship in Ireland.
Your suggestions as to form and content of the News Sheet will be especially welcome.

Service Structure of The Fellowship in Ireland

Each Group is entitled to send two GSRs to Area

Each Area send four members as Delegates to Intergroup

Four Delegates, known as Conference Delegates, represent their Provincial Intergroup at Conference

AA Conference includes The Board, The Board Secretary, the four Intergroup Delegates and Intergroup Secretary together with our two World Service Delegates

The Board itself is made up of four Alcoholic Trustees and three non-Alcoholics Trustees.

A.A. Groups

Area

Intergroup

Conference

Board

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization because, as the structure chart shows, the Groups are on top and the Trustees at the bottom. Bill W. wrote in Concept 1 "The AA Groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world service....". Then in Concept 2, Bill made it clear that the Groups "delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world service and thereby made the Conference... the actual voice and effective conscience for our whole society". However, the Conference structures in countries outside of the U.S./Canada evolved as autonomous entities.



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