



# THE ROAD BACK



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## Brighter Days Ahead

# Editorial

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Road Back. The trees and shrubs have begun to show their buds & shoots, the daffodils have pushed through the soil, and the sun is trying to help brighten our day. It's a reminder of growth, and a new energy that nature is bringing upon us. We are starting to hear of friends and family that have received vaccinations for COVID-19, and we are hoping that soon, our turn will come, so that we can return to a life more similar to what it was a year ago.

Our fellowship has once again proven very resilient and has demonstrated how it can adapt to change. While digital meetings have been a fantastic resource for so many, many of us miss physically meeting our friends in rooms. We know there are some rooms open, but some of us are afraid. We miss having a coffee, a chat, a joke or a reminder to give somebody a call. We wonder about people that we haven't seen and we miss just being present. Just like spring, the vaccination rollout is starting to bring new signs of growth to our population. We can at last start thinking about meeting our friends and family again.

How did you do it? We are sure that our readers would love to hear your story and how you overcame the challenges that you faced. Recently I heard a story where a young relative of mine was finding it very difficult to sleep. Every night, he lay for hours before he drifted off. He was telling his parents about it one evening and his Mam said to him "Just close your eyes and think of nice things". There was a look of bewilderment in his face as he said, "Close my eyes"!!? He didn't know that. Nobody had ever told him that to go asleep, you should close your eyes. He tried it and it worked. Imagine! Sometimes the most obvious things are not so obvious when we assume that everybody knows the same as us. What is obvious to you may be a great help to somebody else. Please let us know. Pop it in an email, don't worry about formatting, we can look after all of that. This is your magazine and the more personal stories that we get from you, the more interesting it will be for all members. You can e-mail [roadback@alcoholicsanonymous.ie](mailto:roadback@alcoholicsanonymous.ie) with your stories.

We are reminded that the General Service Office is fully operational and that orders and queries are being dealt with promptly. While restrictions prevent visitors from popping into the office to collect orders, they are more than willing to have them shipped to you. The staff have been working relentlessly behind the scenes, working from home, yet providing a service that is seamless. On behalf of our readers we would like to express our gratitude to them.

Finally, if you find it difficult to read this magazine online, why not ask somebody to print off a copy for you. If not, contact the General Service Office and they can do it for you.

Continue to keep safe, sober and well, and don't forget to keep in touch with somebody you haven't spoken to in a while.

The Road Back Editorial Team



# THE ROAD BACK

## A meeting in print

**A**lcoholics 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, 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.

The Road Back is published every two months by General Service Conference, Alcoholics Anonymous of Ireland. Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9, D09 H584 Ireland. Telephone: (01) 842 0700

Up to date information on forthcoming Conventions and One Day Events can be viewed on our website at [www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie)

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**Front Cover Image:** Bee pollinating a flower - Wicklow, Ireland



# 6 YEARS ON

I drank for 25 years, mostly as a weekend binge drinker. The first drink I remember taking was on my last day of Year 8. I snuck cask wine into my drink bottle, mixed in a little cordial, and drank it walking home from school. I did this because I was angry at my mother who was a violent alcoholic and who couldn't afford my private school fees anymore because she had racked up debts. She had blown up eleven credit cards to the limit with her compulsive shopping.

In Year 9 I was drinking cherry liqueur with lemonade in my bedroom while doing my homework. That led to buying a six pack of Strongbow cider on my sixteenth birthday. That night my first boyfriend told me I had a problem with alcohol, despite me never getting to drink it. He actually threw the six pack in the bonfire! So, I'm unsure how he came to the conclusion that I had a problem with alcohol. Maybe it was because of my behaviour when drinking it.

Around this time I tried lit sambuca shots with my mum and her two friends. I got a fake ID and started going to bars in St Kilda at sixteen. Nightclubs were too strict with checking IDs, but bars weren't. On the tick of midnight on my eighteenth birthday I was

sitting at the bar of the Waltzing Matilda to receive my first legal drink.

My first year of university was a real eye opener. We had nights of two-dollar shots and pub crawls. I started drinking until I vomited. My housemate would storm off and not walk home with me because I would be vomiting on the way home. I drank like this until I was 39 years old. Consequently, my marriage was heading nowhere with constant romantic liaisons with strangers. My husband and I spoke about having children, but thank God we never took that further. We were both drunks on a path of destruction.

Things got unbelievably worse when my husband got permission for us to stay in the local nightclub while they cleaned up on Saturday nights. So instead of getting kicked out at 1 or 3am with everyone else, we could drink on until 6am. This meant spending Sundays not being able to take a mouthful of food or drink without spewing.

When I wasn't able to take any more of this, I announced "That's it, I'm going to AA." I knew in my heart I couldn't continue to drink like that, and I knew I couldn't stop on my own. I couldn't get past three weeks on my own. I



had tried. I tried Ocsober and Dry July. Both times I hadn't been able to go more than three weeks without a drink. That was my last drink.

## **I thought it was normal to not remember what had happened the night before.**

One week in June 2014 I made it to my first AA meeting. I swear everyone there was over eighty bar one lady. I wondered "What am I doing here?!" "Maybe you don't quit until you're in your 80s." But when I listened to them speak, they had 50 years sobriety. Then I thought maybe I am in the right place. The younger lady came up to me at the end of the meeting and asked if I experienced black outs. I didn't know what she meant. I thought it was normal to not remember what had happened the night before. I did that every weekend. One of the older ladies told me, "You can leave these rooms and never drink again."

At the start I didn't think I would make it past three weeks sobriety. But I thought I should give it a try. I got my first chip at one month. I was sooo excited and sooo proud! That kept me

going for a while. But then my life started changing and that made me want to keep going. I stopped suffering the physical consequences, the hangovers, the heartburn, the reflux, the burning in my stomach, the long migraines, the illnesses I just couldn't shake.

At the start I didn't understand the Steps or Traditions. They could have been written in Chinese for all the sense they made to me. I actually went to a Steps night in my first year and never returned because it went right over my head. I just kept going to meetings and didn't pick up a drink. My mother-in-law stopped drinking to support me. I was sober for a year when my husband and I decided we wanted to have children. So he got sober. When I had been sober for two years and my husband had been sober for one year we conceived our beautiful daughter. Now we have a gorgeous almost four-year-old. I'm still sober. My mother is still sober and my husband barely drinks. I am so proud of the changes we have made as a family. We have broken generational patterns and cycles of abuse.

*BM, Melbourne  
(The News, February 2021)*

Up to date information about Online meetings available on our website at [www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie)



# Some questions & answers about Anonymity in AA

**A.A.** members as well as many people outside the program are sometimes puzzled about how to put the principle of anonymity into practice. Some of the most frequently asked questions about both personal anonymity and anonymity at the public level include:

## Personal anonymity

**Q.** After I tell my loved ones about my A.A. membership, should I ask them not to disclose this information to anyone else?

**A.** This is entirely a personal matter, but it is usually best for all concerned to let the A.A. member decide who shall be told and when.

**Q.** If relatives, friends, and business associates comment on my improved appearance and functioning after I become sober, should I tell them I'm in A.A.?

**A.** Members of the immediate family and close friends are usually pleased to learn about an alcoholic's membership in A.A. As for business associates, it might be best simply to say that you've stopped drinking and postpone decision about disclosing your membership until after you have

been in the Fellowship for several months.

**Q.** What should I do if I meet old acquaintances at A.A. meetings?

**A.** You need not ask them to protect your anonymity; they are there for the same, or similar, reasons. They will generally respect your privacy and you, in turn, should respect theirs.

**Q.** What should I tell my loved ones about protecting the anonymity of the A.A. members they may meet?

**A.** Explain that anonymity is extremely important to A.A. members. Each A.A. member decides if and when to share aspects of his or her recovery, and with whom. Accordingly, it is hoped that family members and other friends of A.A. members protect the anonymity of their loved ones who are in A.A., and that they protect the anonymity of other A.A. members whom they may meet. This includes not disclosing to others the fact that a person is an A.A. member.

In addition, let loved ones know that when an A.A. member dies, it is important not to identify an A.A. sponsor or A.A. friends, as such, in the obituary, in the media, or online.

Q. What if I see public figures at a meeting?

A. Like everyone else, public figures should have the protection of anonymity to the extent that they desire it.

Q. I know that I should not reveal the names of members that I hear in A.A. meetings, but what about other personal information?

A. It is understood by A.A. members that personal disclosures made in A.A. meetings are to be treated as confidential. For example, if friends outside the program are acquainted with some of your A.A. friends and know of their membership, you should be careful not to violate confidences picked up at meetings, however harmless they may appear at the time.

Q. Should I tell people who seem to have a drinking problem about my A.A. affiliation?

A. This is a personal matter. However, the spirit of the program is one of sharing and a recent study of A.A. members shows that a high proportion of them joined the Fellowship through another member. Before reaching a decision about such matters, most members find it helpful to discuss them with sponsors or A.A. friends.

Q. Should I reveal my anonymity to my boss so that I can attend early A.A. meetings regularly?

A. Asking for special favours because of A.A. membership is not in the spirit of the anonymity Traditions.

## Facts about anonymity in A.A.

It is the A.A. member's responsibility, and not that of the media, to maintain our cherished Tradition of anonymity.

- A.A. members generally think it unwise to break the anonymity of the member even after his or her death, but in each situation, the final decision must rest with the family. A.A. members, though, are in agreement that the anonymity of still living A.A. members should be respected in obituaries or in any type of printed remembrance or death notice.
- A.A. members may disclose their identity and speak as recovered alcoholics, giving radio, TV and Internet interviews, without violating the Traditions — so long as their A.A. membership is not revealed.
- A.A. members may speak as A.A. members only if their names or faces are not revealed. They speak not for A.A. but as individual members.



# AA Service

## Service Work Helps to Keep Us Sober

If nobody was doing any service work, the Alcoholics Anonymous program would simply cease to exist. Without the service work of those who came before us, none of us would be here now!

## Service Work In Recovery

One of the more common sayings you will hear at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting is that “you have to give it away in order to keep it”. What this is referring to is the idea that service in recovery can help the giver as much as the receiver. This giving should not be done in the hope of a reward or praise. Instead, the individual does it because they know that it is helping to keep them connected. Numerous studies have provided evidence that helping others in recovery provides great benefit to the helper.

## Service in Recovery Defined

Service in recovery refers to work carried out for no financial

reward or compensation. This may involve directly helping somebody else, or indirectly helping them by providing services. Some individuals do go on to make a career out of helping others, but this is no longer considered service if they receive payment.

## The Importance of Service in Alcoholics Anonymous

Groups like Alcoholics Anonymous could not function without the voluntary services provided by members. All these meetings around the world are organized and maintained by volunteers. There is usually a collection at the end of each meeting, but (in the spirit of the seventh tradition) this money is used to pay for rent, coffee, biscuits, literature, and other overheads. Almost every person at these meetings will provide some type of service, even if it is just sharing a bit of their story or preparing the tea/coffee.

*“Practical experience shows that nothing will so much ensure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.” Big Book, pg. 89*

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# Deo Gratias

To simply see  
And simply be  
No trace of fear  
Forever free

Implicit trust in  
He Who's first  
Always and ever  
The Only must

Knowing, feeling  
Loving, healing  
Nature's effulgence  
Mellifluently unsparing

No plans and schemes  
No 'meeness' dreams  
Desire for Allness  
Losing smallness

A recognition of  
His Name  
I am His son  
The endgame

I do what needs  
To be done  
To His will alone  
My fears succumb

With joy within  
He's graced me  
His Will alone  
Embraces me

No figuring out  
No struggling me  
My sufficiency is  
His Legacy

I light a candle  
I watch the flame  
Surrendering  
I invoke His Name

And though I lose  
My train of thought  
And into dramas  
I am bought  
Can't fight the person  
Albeit it's false  
So I try to accept  
And stay the course

Of what use is power to me  
Why the struggle just to be  
Fretting about outcomes  
I cannot control  
Being One with He  
Is my only role

Knowing fully  
He doeth the works  
For of myself.  
I'm selfed-cursed

To wake up to awareness  
Sweeps all fears away  
It is the mind that separates  
Fragments egoically

Knowing what I'm not  
I now wondrously find  
The gravitational pull  
Of the racing mind  
Is a ceaseless distraction  
A reactive, impulsive urge  
To continuously return to  
Suffering's necessary purge

**LÓB (Loughrea) 280221**

*(Attributed to the impersonal consciousness)*



# My Sneakers Never Looked as Good as Yours

**A**lthough I only drank for five years, I am an alcoholic. I was born with this disease and I will die with this disease. Without AA I would be dead. I am so grateful for this program. It has given me eleven years of sobriety this month. Everything I am is a direct result of God and AA.

When I speak, I talk about my childhood a little, not because I blame anything that happened for my alcoholism. I talk about it because I believe I was born with this disease. Whether I came from a mansion or a cardboard box. I would still be an alcoholic.

As a child I always felt different I like to say I had God hole. I was filled with fear. I never felt I measured up. I always just fell short. I judged my insides by everyone's outside. They all looked happy. I wanted to feel the way they looked. I just didn't know how to get there.

I come from a loving home. Alcohol was always present, but I wouldn't consider it an alcoholic home. I was adopted at age three, but I was never made to feel different. Yet I was always filled with fear. And that God hole was always there.

The best way I can describe the way I felt is with my sneaker story. When I was a kid, sneakers were a big thing. If you had a cool pair of sneakers, then you were cool. So, I would see a cool pair of sneakers on someone and I would go out and get the same pair as they had. But for some reason my sneakers didn't look as good on me as they did on other people. I was in constant turmoil. If I could have unzipped my skin and crawled out, I would have. I was always searching for a way to feel okay, something that would take the fear away.

I had my first drink at age eleven. I had seen drinking as a kid. I noticed before people started drinking, they were quiet. But after a few drinks they seemed to be happy. I wanted what they had. So, a and I raided his mother's liquor cabinet one night. I had a little bit of everything. And then it happened! For the first time in my life, I felt okay. The fear was gone. And my sneakers were as good as everybody else's, and if they weren't, it didn't matter. I could talk to people, I was as good as, and I measured up to. I knew then that I was going to drink whenever I could.

The "Twelve and Twelve" says that "alcohol the rapacious creditor bleeds us of all self-sufficiency and will to resist its demands." "Rapacious" means "feeds on living prey." When I look back, I realise that alcohol robbed me blind. It stole family, opportunities, and finally my desire to live. At the end, I prayed for death.

I became a violent alcoholic. I got in a lot of trouble with the police. At the age of fourteen I got my first unlicensed DWI. Six months after that I got my second DWI. I got into fights and got locked up in a ten-by-ten holding cell several times. Each time I got locked up, I'd say to myself "how could this have happened again? This time it was going to be different." It never was any different. But I believed alcohol took away the fear. I wasn't prepared to give that up.

**I asked God for all  
things that I may  
enjoy life. I was given  
life that I might enjoy  
all things**

The minute I picked up the first drink I no longer had control of how much I would have or what I was going to do. I sat downstairs with my bottle of whiskey like a mad scientist, trying to figure out the right mix so that I could drink normally.

I did what alcohol told me. What choice did I have?

I came around AA for about a year before I got sober. From my first meeting, I knew I belonged. I just thought I was too young. People would tell me when I came back in, "You never have to feel this way again." In December 1987, through the grace of God and AA, I finally believed that in my heart. This program gave me hope even when I didn't want it AA people made me feel okay. God filled the God hole. Everything I looked for in a bottle I found in AA.

My life is beautiful today. I stay close to AA. I try to help another alcoholic. I am active in my home group. I got my driver's licence, I turned twenty-one, got married, had a son, and I did it all sober. To all the young people out there who are unsure, I want to say, "Keep coming back no matter what." Enjoy the gift of sobriety and try to pass it on.

"I would like to close with a line from a prayer I read:" I asked God for all things that I may enjoy life. I was given life that I might enjoy all things.

JL

*Howell, New Jersey  
September 1999*

(AA Grapevine "In your own Words" Page 20-21)



# Acceptance

These various “home remedies” - blaming everybody, self-pity, and the rest - have but one result: They make everybody including ourselves more miserable and add to our difficulties without solving them. Shall we “Curse God and die”? No. Do what the politician does: “If you can’t beat ‘them, join ‘them!” If you can’t solve your problems, learn to live with them and in spite of them.

“Oh sure, sure; just like that! All very well to say, ‘learn to live with them,’ but it’s another thing to do it! Just how do you go about doing that?” Very simple, my friend; so simple you wouldn’t try it unless you were desperate. If you are desperate enough, you’ll try anything. So, try something that works - try acceptance!

Acceptance is the only real source of tranquillity, serenity, peace. It is also known as “Surrender,” “Bowing to the Inevitable,” “Joining ‘them.” It can be acquired if you have an urgent desire to help yourself and are willing yourself and are willing to ask God to help you. Luckily for us, the perfect formula for acceptance, simple and practical as a can-opener, is ready at hand, waiting for us to use it as hundreds of thousands before us have. Written by

Reinhold Niebuhr, it is known far and wide as “The Serenity Prayer.”

**You simply ask God to give you the ability to take people and things as they are if you cannot change them.**

*“God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change.  
Courage to change the things I can; and  
Wisdom to know the difference.”*

You simply ask God to give you the ability to take people and things as they are if you cannot change them. We can very seldom change people, though we can change ourselves. We ask God, further, to enable us to convince ourselves that we would not have things otherwise, even if we could. Only God is powerful enough to control all things, and He seems to prefer to make some things come out right without changing them.

In practice: face up to a problem that is driving you wild, and say, “Is there anything I can do about it right now, today?” If there is, do

it! Don't put it off another minute. If there is nothing you can do about it today, accept it and forget it.

You don't get over a twenty-foot wall by banging your head against it - you just get a headache. If you sit down in the shade of the wall and say, "Maybe I'm better off on this side, after all," you may be sure

that God will make things turn out better for you and for everyone else. This ability of His to make things work out for the best is known as Divine Providence, or "The Kindness of God." ...

*The Way to Serenity and Peace  
of Mind by Vincent P. Collins.*

*(Feb / March 2020 issue The News Magazine)*



**Woman showing her friend her new fur coat -**  
"Do you like it Mary?" "Yes", replied her friend,  
"but I always feel sorry for the poor thing that  
was skinned for it".

"Well. I'm glad someone has some sympathy  
for me" said her husband.



# Gruff Love October 2006

**A**t a recent meeting, we discussed the Twelfth Step. The leader spoke in part about the unfairness of life and a God who allows injustice to take place. His sibling had died some months ago and he still struggled to come to terms with his loss.

I left the meeting disappointed with myself for having offered sympathy without drawing on my own experience. His lingering grief reminded me of a time thirteen years earlier when I had shared from a similar painful place. I hadn't shared about a death, although I too had lost siblings in recovery. I shared about the pain I felt from a then-recent marital separation.

Back then, when I finished, a man raised his hand. I remember little of his share, except roughly these words, and the impatient tone with which they were said: "Go find a newcomer to work with."

What an unfeeling, unkind, SOB he was for offering such a facile solution, I remember thinking. In fact, I worked with a newcomer at the time who called me frequently, but his calls seemed like a small bandage on my gaping wound.

Hundreds of people have been kind to me in recovery since then

and for the most part I have no memory of their kindness. However, this man and his gruff words remain in my mind. I remember him as a man without much in the way of material assets, someone who lived alone and knew the pain of loneliness. He looked like a man who had his ups and downs, who was older-at an age where things like money and love were unlikely to come.

**If I am in pain, this man was saying, it may be beneficial to me if I am aware of those in even more pain**

I remember his words because he spoke not from politeness or easily dispensed solicitude, but from the truth of his own experience. He told me what all great spiritual teachers knew and continue to know, that the world can be a place of suffering and pain as well as joy, and that it's not about fairness and getting my needs met and all the rest. If it were about fairness, I might not have the gift of sobriety, given my flawed character and outrageous behaviour when I drank.

If I am in pain, this man was saying, it may be beneficial to me if I am aware of those in even more pain. He tried to remind me that the answer for my pain was in the Twelfth Step, and in the

spiritual conditioning required to live in the fulfilment of it.

DS

*New York, New York  
(Grapevine No Matter What Page 68-69)*

Life takes on a new meaning in AA. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends – this is an experience not to be missed.

**As Bill Sees It - Article 90**

## Trouble: Constructive or Destructive?

"There was a time when we ignored trouble, hoping it would go away. Or, in fear and in depression, we ran from it, but found it was still with us. Often, full of unreason, bitterness, and blame, we fought back. These mistaken attitudes, powered by alcohol, guaranteed our destruction, unless they were altered.

Then came A.A. Here we learned that trouble was really a fact of life for everybody – a fact that had to be understood and dealt with. Surprisingly, we found that our troubles could, under God's grace, be converted into unimagined blessings.

Indeed, that was the essence of A.A. itself: trouble accepted, trouble squarely faced with calm courage, trouble lessened and often transcended. This was the A.A. story, and we became a part of it. Such demonstrations became our stock in trade for the next sufferer."

**As Bill Sees It - Article 110**



# Heard at Meetings

“ ‘Learn to accept instead of expect “

“ Life begins when you are ready to step out of your comfort zone “

“ A.A. can do quite well without me, but how well can I do without A.A.? “

“ Just focus on taking one day at a time “

“ Change starts with a choice. Make your decision today “

“ In sobriety, I get to have a relationship with reality “

“ Don't count the days, make the days count “

“ The worst day sober is still always better than the best day drunk “

“ Steps are the path to inner peace “

# On Tradition Meetings

Yes, I have heard that cry “had I known it was a tradition meeting I would not have come” yes, the opinion of someone who does not fully understand how important the Traditions are. By 1944 AA was growing and some groups were having issues and asked Bill for some guidance. He got groups to write to him explaining the issues they were having and when he saw the problems he set about putting in place what was then called 12 Points to Assure AAs Future, originally it was 6 points. The Traditions were first published in the Grapevine 1946 and form part of our preamble that is read at every AA meeting. Bill did write some parts of the Traditions in the foreword to the first addition of the Big Book 1939.

Bill believed AA needed some form of written guidance to address or prevent issues arising within the fellowship and set about writing what we now know as the 12 Traditions. He had planned to write the Traditions as a booklet but a member, Tom.P, pointed out to him that members would see them as rules and have no interest so he suggest to Bill that if he were to write 12 essays on the Steps and put these together with the

12 Traditions and as members would want to read his essays this would get the Traditions into the hands of members, and so was born what is now referred to as the 12X12. At first Dr Bob objected to the Traditions as he feared members would see them as rules but did eventually see the logic in them. They accepted at the first international in 1950 and published in 1953.

**Our Traditions  
were as Bill said,  
“hammered out  
on the anvil of  
experience”**

Bill called them the Traditions because he feared member would see them as rules and he recalled back in his home town of Vermont the council wanted to stop people walking on a grass verge in front of the Town Hall the notice “Please Don’t Walk on The Grass” was not working so they changed them to read “It’s a Tradition Not to Walk on the Grass Verge”, it worked. Our Traditions were as Bill said, “hammered out on the anvil of experience”.

J.

Up to date information about Online meetings available on our website at [www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie)



# The 12 Promises of AA

*If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.*

1. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.
2. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.
3. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.
4. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.
5. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.
6. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.
7. Self-seeking will slip away.
8. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.
9. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.
10. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.
11. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.
12. Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.



# 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 practice these principles in all our affairs.

# 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 centres may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organised; 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.



We, *The Road Back* Editorial Team, look forward to hearing from you with your stories, snippets of amusing things overheard at meetings, indeed anything that carries a message of sobriety to our readership.

*Your contributions can be emailed to:*  
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*or posted to:*  
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Up to date information on forthcoming Conventions and One Day Events can be viewed on our website at  
**[www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie)**