



THE UPDATE

Alcoholics Anonymous Sarnia/Lambton District 14

Issue 05 ~ WINTER 2023/2024

newsletter@asarnialambton.com

Welcome to the Winter Edition of THE UPDATE for 2023/2024. We will be taking a look at the principles behind the steps of each corresponding month.

December - Step 12 - SERVICE

January - Step 1 - HONESTY

February - Step 2 - HOPE

This issue is filled with personal stories of recovery, strength, and hope to help navigate a newly sober holiday season and to show that WE do succeed in recovery. Please remember, the opinions expressed herein are only suggestions, and are shared from personal experiences with the disease of alcoholism.

If you would like to share with the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous by submitting a story, joke, cartoon, announcement, event, or information, please reach out to:

newsletter@asarnialambton.com

Newsletter Chair: Jamie S.



Open Service Positions - District 14

dcm@sarnialambton.com

- Alternate DCM
- Alternate Treasurer
- Secretary/Registrar
- Alternate Secretary/Registrar
- Cooperation with the Professional Community

Carl S. will be the DCM of District 14, Area 86 for the 2024/2025 term. (Panel 74)

DID YOU KNOW???

The 2025 International A.A. Convention will be held in Vancouver, July 2nd-5th!! This event only happens every 5 years and in 2025 it will be held in Canada!

REGISTRATION for the ORC IS OPEN

Mark your calendars for March 15-17, 2024. The theme for the 2024 Ontario Regional Conference is "A New Freedom".



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TRUDGE THE ROAD OF HAPPY DESTINY



"My name is Lynne W and I am an alcoholic.

But for the Grace of God and the Fellowship of A.A., this will be my 20th consecutive sober Christmas season. As I stay sober longer and get older, I've come to realize that the holiday season is about spending time with the family and friends who are always there for us. In the good times, and ALL the time.

I'm blessed with 6 Grandchildren ranging in age from 14 months to 20 years old! None of them have seen Grandma drink...that's miraculous and humbling at the same time. They are one of the many reasons I love being sober. Life isn't always easy, and it sure isn't perfect, but I wouldn't trade sobriety for anything.

My 1st sponsor Ann F. was asked by someone just coming into A.A. at about this time of year "How am I going to stay sober during the holidays" Her answer was "Do you read the Daily Reflections? If you do look at December 25th, it doesn't say Christmas! It's really just another day" What I heard was "One Day At A Time".

It's a busy time of year with lots of get-togethers. If I am in the right spiritual condition I can go anywhere, I do make sure I have an escape route if needed, take my own vehicle and if I'm really not feeling right, I just don't go. With holidays rapidly approaching, I just try to do the do things. Go to meetings, read the literature, talk to another alcoholic every day, and have a good sponsor. In other words, if I keep doing what I've been doing, it will work. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to my fellow travellers as we 'Trudge the Road of Happy Destiny'!"

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

****SOBER SAFE SPACE****

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 24TH 4PM-1AM

TURKEY DINNER @ 5PM

Royal Canadian Legion

SPIRIT OF NEW YEARS

DECEMBER 31ST 4PM-1AM

TURKEY DINNER @ 5PM

Lochiel Kiwanis Centre

Bring your families, children,
and loved ones - All are
welcome! Bring a prepared
dinner item, snack or
dessert, only if you can!

- FELLOWSHIP
- MEETINGS
- MUSIC & GAMES
- GIFTS FOR THE KIDS



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SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

STEP TWELVE – DECEMBER

Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs. ~ **SERVICE**

Service in the Group

In A.A., everything starts with the group — it is the place where recovery begins for most alcoholics and is the basic building block of the entire Fellowship. But, for a group to keep going, all kinds of service must be done.

It is through the combined efforts and ongoing commitment of group members that:

- A meeting place is readily available and maintained
- Meetings are arranged for the benefit of the alcoholics in attendance
- Calls for help are answered
- Voluntary contributions are collected to keep the group and the Fellowship going financially.
- Literature is provided for all members and lists of local group meetings are made available.
- Continuing contact is sustained with the rest of A.A.

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“Staying sober and keeping myself aware of my situations over the holidays has been and always will be a huge part of my success as a sober Alcoholic. The first few years, I limited the events I attended and picked the ones that I knew would have little or no alcohol involved, but that can be difficult to do since everyone is celebrating the holiday season. I was told by my sponsor, years ago, always to have a backup plan when attending a gathering. i.e. I made sure my wife was okay if I decided it was time to go (no questions asked) or knowing that my vehicle was parked in a place that would not get blocked in if I decided to make a quick escape if I started to feel like I wanted to join the party or just wasn’t comfortable in my surroundings. Over many years in the fellowship of A.A., my anxiety about being around people who are drinking has subsided. I never let my guard down, even after all these years. If I am going to a party with alcohol, I usually try to get there early and leave early before the alcohol gets flowing freely. My biggest safety net is staying in touch with my sponsor and like-minded people, and attending lots of meetings to keep myself grounded and remind me who I am and the disease of alcoholism that I have.

PS. Have a happy sober holiday season. It’s an awesome way of life.”

Dave. T.



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GOOD COMPANY WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE

"Hello fellow Alcoholics.

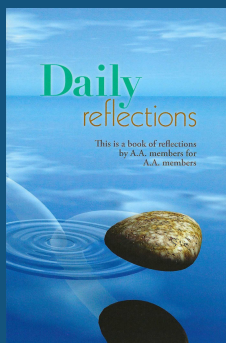
My first Christmas holiday season as a sober person brought a lot of anxiety. I had been drinking and partying daily for quite a few years before that first sober year. I had even more and better excuses to be even more excessive during the holidays. So, I made careful plans before the holiday season started. I avoided my old habit of randomly stopping in on family friends and acquaintances. I completely avoided places where heavy drinking would occur. For family gatherings, I noticed there were lots of people to socialize with who were completely or mostly sober and since I was sober, I found them more interesting to talk to. I also ate a lot of the sweet treats since my body was craving the sugar I wasn't getting from alcohol. I did pop in on friends that were binge drinkers but just long enough to say hi. I had a lot of time on my hands during the holidays so I went to more meetings in other towns with sober people I met at Sarnia A.A. meetings. The Spirit of Christmas and New Year's recovery gatherings were great since I got to spend hours in good company with like-minded people who were also staying away from alcohol. Every year the holiday season has become less stressful and much more enjoyable. And now I have that booze budget to spend on presents and quality food. Happy Holidays!"

Brian R.

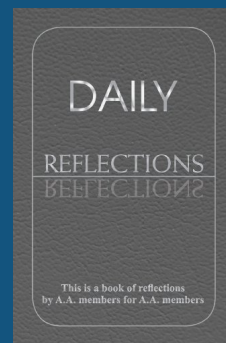
IN MEMORIAM



District 14 Sarnia-Lambton
Alcoholics Anonymous
remembers all members of our
Fellowship who passed away in
2023. Their spirit remains
forever in our midst. May they
Rest in Peace.



Looking for an easy way to connect to recovery on a daily basis? Please check out the "Daily Reflections". Each month's readings loosely focus on the corresponding step, and provide inspiration on your journey.





A NEW RESOLUTION

STEP ONE – JANUARY

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable. ~ **HONESTY**

This Matter of Honesty

“The problem of honesty touches nearly every aspect of our lives. There are, for example, the widespread and amazing phenomena of self-deception. There are those rather dreadful brands of reckless truth-telling, which are so often lacking in prudence and love. Then there are those countless life situations in which nothing less than utter honesty will do, no matter how sorely we may be tempted by the fear and pride that would reduce us to half-truths or inexcusable denials.” Bill W.

A.A. Grapevine – August 1961



“New Year’s Eve, for me, used to revolve completely around booze; planning, buying, and of course, drinking. There were always unrealistic resolutions to lose weight, exercise, be more organized, and spend less money. All of which were never fulfilled. These days, New Year’s Eve is a calmer, quiet affair spent with good friends having a relaxed dinner, and listening to great music. There are no big declarations or resolutions made in public. My quiet resolution to myself is a continued daily reprieve from drinking. I hope to work my program to the best of my ability and to be of service to others. AA has taught me to do these things. One day at a time and my own experience has shown me how incredible life can be when I put these things into practice. I get to live a new life without the daily shame, guilt, and regret I once had.”

–Annie R.

A great big **THANK YOU** to the 2023 Bluewater Three Legacies Committee Members as well as each and every one of the VOLUNTEERS! Your service is appreciated. It was a wonderful day had by all. Grateful for all the attendees and hope to see you all next year!



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FALLING IN LOVE WITH MYSELF A TRUE LOVE STORY

STEP TWO – FEBRUARY

Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. ~ **HOPE**

DAILY REFLECTIONS

HOPE

Do not be discouraged.
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p.60

“Hope is the key that unlocks the door of discouragement. The program promises me that if I do not pick up the first drink today, I will always have hope.”



“For most of my life, I’ve been on what can only be called a “quest for love”. As a child, I was taught to love my family, God, and “thy neighbour, as thy self”. I never really paid any attention to the “as thy self” part though and throughout my life formed habits of people pleasing, inability to set boundaries, seeking validation from others, and other behaviours. This resulted in a lot of misconstrued views of how to bring love into my life or what love really looked like.

In recovery, I’ve been taught that I need to learn to love myself first. But what does that even mean? I spent most of my life trying to be someone that I thought was loveable. Based out of fear of disapproval or abandonment, and not rooted in love. Today self-love looks like me treating myself with the same kindness, compassion, and grace that I now treat those around me with. Showing up for myself and doing things that I know will enhance my spiritual condition. Giving and receiving forgiveness. Having self-compassion and feeling my feelings. Creating healthy boundaries and not seeking approval and validation from external sources. Learning to fall in love with myself has been a beautiful adventure while creating a life I don’t want to escape.”

Charlene F.



Have immediate access to local meeting times and locations. Download the **Meeting Guide** app to keep you connected to the program.

Don’t Drink & Go To Meetings





We celebrate our recovery milestones together in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. It brings hope to the newcomers and builds unity in our A.A. community!

HAPPY
Birthday

DECEMBER

Erica M. Wednesday Night Group December 1, 2018
BarbaraAnn S. Serenity by the Lake December 2, 1990
Wayne D. Bridgeview Group December 2, 2001
Ryan W. Murphy Road Group December 6, 2020
John B. As Bill Sees It December 25, 2017
John F. As Bill Sees It December 26, 1988
Brooke A. Murphy Road Group December 28, 2015
Terry P. Forest Lakeside Group December 30, 2021
Irene P. Hub Group December 31, 1999
Rachel B. Murphy Road Group December 31, 2016

JANUARY

Don D. Murphy Road Group January 3, 2014
Steve G. Mooretown Friday Night January 4, 1985
Kyle M. Murphy Road Group January 17, 2017
John B. Murphy Road Group January 20, 2019
Mary B. Forest Lakeside Group January 25, 1991
Jack M. Wednesday Night Group January 26, 1991
Doug V. Murphy Road Group January 29, 1990
Adrian M. High Noon Group January 29, 1992



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HAPPY
Birthday

FEBRUARY

Angela P. As Bill Sees It Group February 1, 2019
Jan L. Forest Lakeside Group February 3, 1991
Leo N. Wednesday Night Group February 6, 1983
Sam M. Murphy Road Group February 22, 2013
Julie A. Murphy Road Group February 23, 2017
Sue T. Forest Lakeside Group February 23, 1992
Lance R. Centennial Group February 26, 2005
Bob C. Hub Group February 26, 2004
Kelly S. Murphy Road Group February 27, 2022

****Please note: Birthday Announcements can only be included in the newsletter if each group's G.S.R. submits an updated list to Jamie S. at newsletter@aasarnialambton.com ****



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