

HEART TO HEART

*regina & area
alcoholics anonymous®intergroup*

Tradition Twelve:

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities."

Service Meetings

All members of AA are welcome to attend:

- Office Committee Meeting Monday before Intergroup 6:30
- Intergroup First Wednesday of the month 6:30
- Districts 15, 17, 18 Second Wednesday of the month 7:30

For the most up-to-date list of meetings on Zoom or in-person, please visit www.aaregina.com.

24 HOUR ANSWERING SERVICE TO SPEAK TO ANOTHER ALCOHOLIC OUTSIDE OF OFFICE HOURS 306.545.9300



regina aa central office

Central Office is staffed



Monday & Wednesday from 10 - 3PM & Friday 10 - 2PM.

Closed statutory holidays.

Please feel free to stop by with any questions or concerns.

A.A.-approved literature is available for purchase as well as a selection of sobriety anniversary cards and medallions for sale.

Suite 107 – 845 Broad Street

Regina, Sask. S4R 8G9

email: a.a@sasktel.net

306-545-9300



STAYING SOBER DURING THE HOLIDAYS: 7 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

'Tis the season for holiday celebrations and family gatherings; the season of gift-giving and champagne-toasting; the season in which many of us come together to 'eat, drink, and be merry.' Yet as fun and joyous as they can be, the holidays often commence a challenging time for those in or new to recovery.

Amidst all the commotion of the holiday season, it can be easy for those in recovery to feel alone in their journeys. If you too feel like you are the only one not drinking at a party or bringing in a boozy new year, the only one trying to figure out how to stay sober during the holidays, we want you to know that you are not alone. Today, about one in every 12 American adults is battling a substance addiction. Whether you can see it or not, there are millions of people in recovery facing very similar challenges: to pass up that glass of wine, to stay sane amidst the stresses of the holiday season, and to keep their commitment to sobriety as old friends and family members come home for winter break. Like them, you too can keep sober during the holidays with the right steps taken.

You'll just need a bit of preparation and a lot of dedication to get through until January. Here are seven tips for staying sober during the holidays.

1. Recognize your relapse triggers.

This year, you may be brought back to places and parties where you used to have fun and get high. You may run into old friends who are back in town, old friends from your using days, who will remind you of substance use. You may find yourself grieving relationships and ties that were broken during the holiday season.

As a part of your recovery plan, it is important to know how to properly cope with the relapse triggers that the holidays so often bring. Manage them as they arise so that you do not find yourself face-to-face with relapse. If you encounter a familiar, dangerous situation, walk away. If you feel yourself getting frustrated or lonely in your sobriety, talk to someone you trust. If you feel physically or mentally exhausted, get some rest to try and quiet any uneasiness. Properly taking care of yourself – physically, mentally, and emotionally – can help you avoid a relapse.

2. Start every day with a plan.

To avoid holiday temptations, start each waking day with a plan to keep sober. This means thinking ahead about all the possible triggers and situations that may come your way during the holiday season. Always be prepared. If you are in a place where your drug cravings start to unleash, have a plan to settle them. Leave the situation or call a sober friend. If you are uncomfortable at a party, be sure that you always have your own way home. Decide in advance what you are going to say if someone offers you a drink. Rehearse three or four responses. A polite, clear "No, thank you" most often does the trick, but you may encounter pushy and prodding people as well. Have a plan for dealing with them, whether it be saying, "I don't drink for health reasons" or just simply walking away.

3. Keep a (non-alcoholic) drink in your hand.

If it's one of your first sober holiday parties, you may be a bit anxious about having to deny drinks or talk about your recovery. To avoid excessive explanations or denials, simply carry a drink of choice in your hand – egg nog, water, coffee, whichever you prefer. By doing so, you will most often avoid the question altogether. And if someone does offer you a glass of wine, you can easily turn it down by saying, “No, thank you, I’m all set.”

4. Don't be afraid to talk about your recovery.

Sobriety and recovery are losing the stigma they once carried. Most people know someone who has battled addiction. Of course, it is your choice whether you want to talk about your journey, just know that you do not have to be afraid to do so. By being open about it, you will likely gain more support and encouragement than you'd ever imagined from family and friends. You may even inspire others to take the leap in their own efforts to get sober. If you just want to tell a selected, trusted number of people about your sobriety, that can also be beneficial. By doing so, you will gain some accountability as well as a small support system as you stay sober during the holidays.

5. Keep busy.

Don't let yourself spend too much time sitting around and chatting with your friends and family members. Because most often, this sitting around can involve or lead to drinking. This year, plan some more engaging activities. Get outside for some ice skating or sledding with the family. Plan Yankee swaps or other holiday games to engage both the young and the old. Help out with decorating, cooking, or driving to and from events in efforts to stay sober.

6. Learn how to channel holiday stress.

While most often a merry time, many people still experience stress during the holidays. Whether it be last-minute gift giving or stressful relationships within the family, you may know these anxieties as well. In the past, you may have channeled these stresses through drinking and drug use. You may have used substances as an escape. In recovery, you must find new ways to cope with your stresses – such as working out at the gym, going for a walk, reading a book, or meeting a sober friend for coffee.

7. Stick to your meeting schedule or call in your sober network when you need support.

Despite being the holidays, 12-step meetings do not take days off. Whether you are home for the holidays or traveling, find a meeting place or recovery center near you. Meet with others who are staying sober during the holidays, people who are like you and understand your journey, to help keep you on the right path.

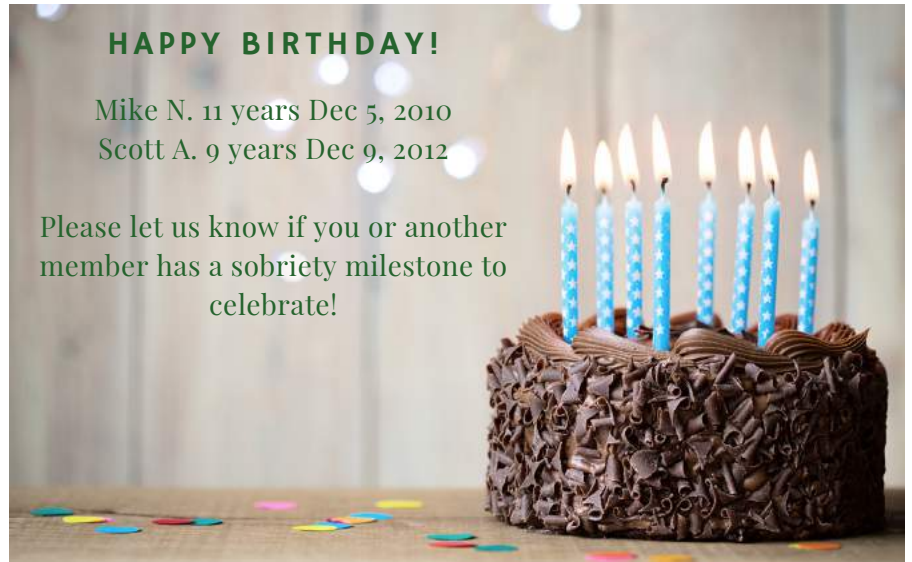
<https://www.turnbridge.com/news-events/latest-articles/staying-sober-during-the-holidays/#>

For a list of local daily meetings visit www.aaregina.com

**STEP TWELVE
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.**



Under provincial Covid-19 guidelines, face masks are required in indoor public gathering spaces in Regina. This includes AA meetings,



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Mike N. 11 years Dec 5, 2010

Scott A. 9 years Dec 9, 2012

Please let us know if you or another member has a sobriety milestone to celebrate!

**IN SEARCH OF:
AA 12 STEPS**

Wall Hanging/Window Shade.

The Corrections Committee is looking for one that was borrowed in the past. With fewer in-person meetings taking place, if you have an extra that could be gifted to the committee for use at corrections facilities, please contact the office a.a@sasktel.net.

Your recovery story is valuable to other members.

If you are willing to share your story - in a speaker's meeting or in this newsletter - please contact our office or submit it here.

Our editors will review it for the next issue of Heart to Heart!

BREAKING DOWN STEP TWELVE OF AA ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

The 12 Steps are kind of like a recipe for a special cake, one that brings about a personality change sufficient to allow us alcoholics to recover from our alcoholism. When we've baked the delicious spiritual experience cake, as directed and arrived at step 12, it's time for my favorite part: putting the icing on the cake!

The 12 steps of A.A. in simplest terms are a solution to the disease of alcoholism. They are a set of universal guiding principles that merge the traditional boundaries of religion, history, culture and wisdom traditions. They outline a course of action that, when followed, will remove the obsession in the mind, connect you to a Higher Power and as you continue to grow, show you how to help others who still struggle.

THE PRINCIPLES OF AA STEP 12 ARE:

1. **Honesty**
2. **Hope**
3. **Faith/Action**
4. **Courage**
5. **Integrity**
6. **Willingness**
7. **Humility**
8. **Brotherly/Sisterly Love**
9. **Discipline/ Justice**
10. **Perseverance**
11. **Spiritual Awareness**
12. **Service**



AA STEP 12: SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The concept of “spiritual awakening” has many meanings. Keeping it simple, a spiritual awakening is really just a psychic change that, among other things, eliminates our obsession to drink. For some it can be quite a powerful and immediate experience, for others it is an ongoing co-current part of working the 12 steps.

The co-founder of AA, Bill W. mentions in his autobiography that for him it was a sudden, strong “white light” and life-changing event: “I stood upon a summit where a great wind blew. A wind not of air, but of spirit. In great, clean strength it blew right through me. Then came the blazing thought, ‘You are a free man.’”

It gives me chills every time I read that, because after that moment, Bill never took another drink. Thanks to him there are many more free men and women today. For most of us, the “aha” moments, that may not be a white light, are regular events and part of the spiritual awakening that happens over time in a subtle and gradual way.

continued on next page...

AA STEP 12: CARRYING THE MESSAGE

I am responsible when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there, and for that I am responsible.

The second part of the 12th step is about carrying the message of recovery to other people. This is not because AA is a cult, it's because "we keep what we have by giving it away." To keep it simple, when we work with others, our lives change. So, we don't help another alcoholic because they're sick—we help another alcoholic because we are sick, and part of our recovery is that we need to be helping others.

The most important things to remember about this part of the AA Step 12 are:

The Twelve Steps are a program of attraction, not promotion. We lead by our own example, so talk to people when they are ready and when the time is right they'll ask: "How can I get what you've got?"

Keep your message for the person who's dependent on alcohol (and/or drugs) to what it was like for you, the result of your steps, and that you have not gotten drunk or stoned.

When talking to a newcomer, let go of labels and referring to them as alcoholics or addicts. Truthfully tell your story and let other people decide if it rings true for them.

Sometimes carrying the message can be as simple as making sure that there is a warm, caring, non-judgmental place for other alcoholics to come back to and a hand shake or hug that says "We're here for you—come on in—and keep coming back!"

The beauty and eloquence of AA Step 12 is part of many promises of working the A.A. program. Life really does take on new meaning when watching people recover, seeing them help others, and watching loneliness vanish. Frequent contact with newcomers, and with each other, is the bright spot of our newfound lives.

THE ICING ON THE CAKE: PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLES

When we have had a spiritual awakening as a result of our efforts we are finally able to do, feel, and believe that which we could not do before. This gift, which is a new state of consciousness and being, is really the icing on the cake of sobriety.

On a daily basis we have the opportunity to put into practice things that we are finally in possession of: a degree of honesty, tolerance, unselfishness, peace of mind, and love. Practicing the 12 steps in all our affairs, trusting a higher power, cleaning house, sharing our experience strength and hope, staying active in service one day at a time, for the rest of our life...is like eating cake, with icing, everyday.

NOTES FROM INTERGROUP

Dear Fellow A.A. Members;

Intergroup has just had the monthly meeting with willing and enthusiastic members, however there are still six positions that need to be filled. The most pressing at the moment is the Alcathon chair position. The decision has been made that if, by December 10th no one has stepped up then the Alcathon will not happen this year. So please consider helping the Regina and Area A.A. community hold this very popular, annual event.

Please announce at meetings that a chair and volunteers are needed. Anyone interested please contact Central Office at aaregina.com or myself at Intergroupchair@aaregina.com.

The remaining five positions available are the Central Office Trustee, the Office Chair, the Webservant, Intergroup Secretary, and Social Committee chair. Please check aaregina.com for information about those positions or contact me. Please consider Intergroup as a possibility for greater fulfilment and growth. We are a good bunch of friendly people. Please, as always, consider joining us.

Central Office hours will be changing for a trial period during the month of December. The new hours will be 10:00am to 3:00pm on Mondays and Wednesdays and 10:00am to 2:00pm on Fridays. Please let us know your thoughts by contacting the officecommitteechair@aaregina.com

On behalf of the Regina and Area Intergroup I wish everyone a serene and sober holiday season.

Come join us.

In Gratitude,

Catherine S., Intergroup chair.

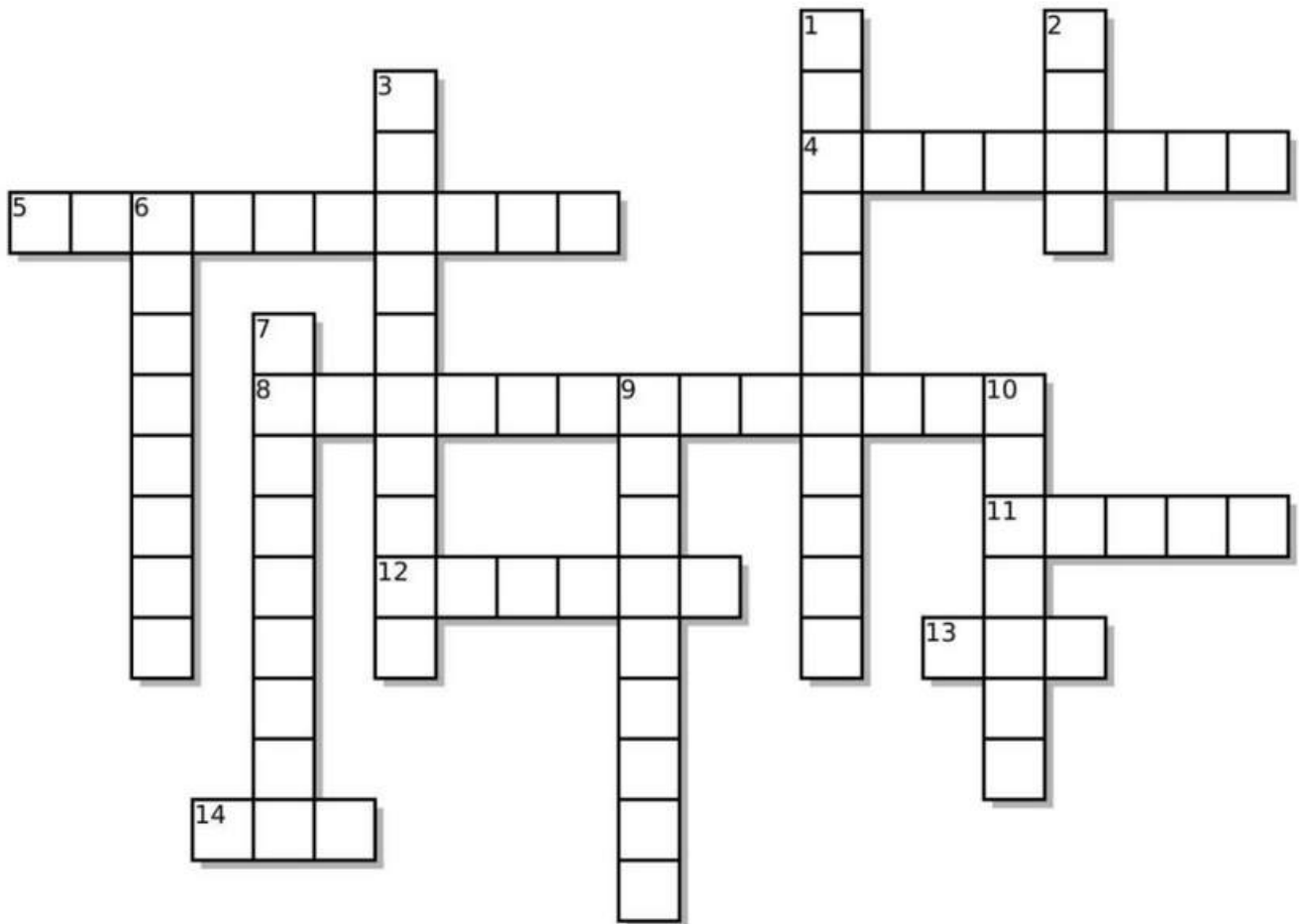
Reminder: Online Contributions for Groups

At the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, gathering restrictions prevented in-person meetings and therefore, Tradition 7 cash contributions. As a temporary emergency measure for group relief, the AA Regina Office began accepting eTransfer contributions on behalf of groups and redistributing these to each group. Groups have now established their own email addresses and banking arrangements for eTransfers, therefore effective October 1, 2021 eTransfer contributions for groups will NO LONGER be accepted and redistributed to groups. Any money received for individual groups through the office email will be re-directed to Intergroup.

Please encourage members wishing to contribute funds to your group to do so via the group's own email account.



DECEMBER CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 4 ..._____ contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.
- 5 What is the number one offender?
- 8 Principles before _____
- 11 What was Dr. Bob's dog's name?
- 12 If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion, that someday we will be _____ to alcohol.
- 13 How many General Warranties of the Conference are there?
- 14 We practice the principles in _____ our affairs.

DOWN

- 1 Daily _____ - This collection of readings moves through the calendar year one day, and one page, at a time.
- 2 How many editions of the Big Book are there?
- 3 ...The Conference itself will always remain _____ in thought and action. (from Concept XII)
- 6 The state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled.
- 7 The alcoholic has a daily reprieve from drinking contingent upon the maintenance of our _____ condition.
- 9 The spiritual foundation of all our Traditions
- 10 The spiritual principle behind Step 12.



THE GIFT OF DESPERATION

BY RICK R.

November Puzzle Solution



I WOKE UP IN DESPERATION, HALF A CENTURY AGO I HAD SQUANDERED ALL MY OPTIONS AND, I HAD NO PLACE TO GO. GUILT AND SHAME AND LOATHING THOUGHTS WEIGHED, HEAVY ON MY MIND BUT I WAS USED TO WAKING UP, WITH DARK THOUGHTS OF THAT KIND MY DRINKING USED TO MASK THE FEELINGS, THAT I FELT THAT DAY. AND IF I VENTURED JUST ONE SIP, THEY'D SOON BE WASHED AWAY AS I LOOK BACK ON THAT EVENT, IT'S VERY PLAIN TO SEE THE THOUGHT THAT GRIPPED MY CONSCIENCE WAS, A NEW REALITY IT WAS MY DAY OF RECKONING AND, I CHERISH IT TODAY FOR WITHOUT THAT DESPERATION I, MAY NOT HAVE CALLED AA WITHIN MOMENTS OF EXPOSURE TO THAT KIND AND LOVING GROUP THE DRINK OBSESSION VANISHED. OPTIMISM CLOSED THAT LOOP. THINKING SOMEDAY I'D BE TEMPTED; I WAS VIGILANT FROM THE START. AND SINCE IT NEVER HAPPENED, I THANK GOD WITH ALL MY HEART FOR DECADES I HAVE QUESTIONED WHY IT WORKS SO WELL FOR ME WHILE WATCHING OTHERS SUFFER THROUGH A LIFE OF MISERY WHEN ASKED THAT SIMPLE QUESTION I NOW ANSWER WITH A SMILE IT HAPPENED WHEN DESPERATION FAR OUTWEIGHED MY OWN DENIAL.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS/HAPPY HOLIDAYS
DECEMBER-FINAL.PDF
(AAINTHEDESERT.ORG)**

AREA 91 REMOTE CONNECTIONS
Sundays @ 7PM
Zoom Meeting
ID# 498 714 649
Password: 912020

Remote Communities
aasask.org