

# MAINSTAY

A low-angle photograph of a bottlebrush tree, showing several bright red, cylindrical flower heads on green stems with small leaves. The background is a clear, bright blue sky.

**New Zealand - Aotearoa**

**December 2015 - January 2016**

**Experience ~ Strength ~ Hope**

# The 12 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.*

## ***AA Preamble***

*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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### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**NZGSO, AA - PO Box 6458,  
Wellington 6141**

**Ph: 04 - 472 4250**

**Email: [nzgso@aa.org.nz](mailto:nzgso@aa.org.nz)**

**Website - [www.aa.org.nz](http://www.aa.org.nz)**

**Mainstay - Email:  
[mainstay@aa.org.nz](mailto:mainstay@aa.org.nz)**

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Mainstay is the magazine of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand. It communicates the experience, strength, and hope of AA in New Zealand reflecting a broad spectrum of current AA experience in recovery, unity, and service. Mainstay is a 'meeting in print' including the service and AA group fellowship aspects of AA life and AA meetings, and only publishes articles relating to AA and alcoholism. Mainstay aims to be self supporting and is not affiliated to any outside groups or interests and does not accept paid advertising. Submission of articles and letters (up to 600 words) are invited and should be sent to:

**Mainstay  
NZGSO  
PO Box 6458  
Wellington 6141  
Phone: (04) 472 4250  
Email: [mainstay@aa.org.nz](mailto:mainstay@aa.org.nz)**

Publication of any article does not imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or Mainstay. Personal opinions expressed in letters or articles should not be attributed to the Fellowship. There is no payment for contributions and they cannot be returned. The editor may edit material and cannot guarantee to publish every contribution.

Anonymity will be protected, but contributions and correspondents are asked to include their first name, locality and a contact telephone number or email/physical address (not for publication).

*I am Responsible*

*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.*

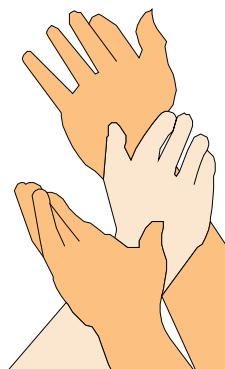


PHOTO CREDITS:  
Front and back: Bottle Brush, both by Toni C. Wellington



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## *Editorial*

Two Thousand and fifteen has flown by, and Christmas, summer holidays and summer weather are almost here.

Despite the obvious pressures with the run up to Christmas, shopping, and planning, and the onslaught of Christmas marketing everywhere, I am reminded of my single daily purpose, which is to ask for a daily reprieve from the vagaries of the disease of alcoholism. My willingness to do this will ensure that, provided I don't pick up a drink today, I will remain sober.

For those in early recovery this time of year can be fraught with difficulty, as they 'see others take a drink with impunity' whereas for the alcoholic, he or she has lost the power to control or enjoy his or her drinking as they once might have. The all too prevalent presence of seasonal bonhomie is evident in the work place, at home, and the demands to attend annual social gatherings where alcohol will be readily and abundantly available.

How do alcoholics maintain any sort of immunity from these social pressures at this time of the year?

The Big Book clearly sets out a very effective strategy to enable AA's of whatever sobriety length to encompass the seasonable sociability, some of which we are obliged to be a part of. It is suggested that we examine our motives for attending any social gathering where alcohol is served. What can we, as individuals, bring to the occasion?

By all means attend, but as that passage goes on to suggest, 'if it gets too hot, get out of the kitchen'. Have your own car, so you can quietly and discretely leave. In most cases an hour or so is sufficient to have discharged your obligations, enjoy the food, some conversation, and good company. If need be, get yourself to a meeting, this is also a very effective exit strategy.

What has helped me in the past, was the very action which helped my become involved in AA, which was to volunteer to set up the meeting, pack down chairs, do the dishes... The very same action could be adopted at whatever gathering you are attending; help with food, dishes, or any other activity which might help keep your hands busy and full with anything else other than a drink.

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The same could also be applied on Christmas Day, New Years' Eve, and BBQs etc.

The most important element of Christmas is being with family and friends. Families can also pose an emotional minefield, as family members do have an unerring habit of 'pushing our buttons'. Retire from the fray, take time out, text or talk to another alcoholic. Happily too, there is a meeting somewhere where you are, and if you need to get to it.

Often there are informal gatherings within your local fellowship, so if invited, do attend; once again, daily contact with other alcoholics is the high spot of our lives, and we cannot do this on our own.

My sincere thanks to all who have helped Mainstay continue to be 'our meeting in print'. My sincere and heartfelt thanks to Mike at GSO and my two delightful MS colleagues, Toni and June for their unflagging support this year.

Wishing all in the fellowship a happy safe sober and relaxed Christmas, New Year and summer break.

Next issue of Mainstay will be 5th February 2016, so deadline for letters will be no later than January 30th.

Yours in Service

**Randal P.**

**Editor**



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# Sharing...

*Mainstay Editorial policy is to accept and publish letters up to 600 words. Any copy exceeding 600 words will be edited to comply. Sensitivity and discretion will be used to maintain the integrity of the original correspondence.*

*With Thanks*

*Careful consideration is given to all written submissions and letters of experience strength and hope sent to Mainstay for possible publication.*

***Preference is given to letters which outline What we were like, what the AA programme has done, or is doing for us, and what we are like now.***

*Topics , subjects and information deemed suitable for publication fall quite simply into the same criteria that is applied in meetings, and relevant to your own recovery. Is the information you want to share likely to help other alcoholics? Mainstay is "A meeting in print"*

*Any correspondence not published will have been considered not fitting into any of the above criteria.*

*We are frequently advised as part of our programme to exercise restraint of pen and tongue. Nowhere is this more important than in the pages of Mainstay. Once in print, Mainstay is an effective means of carrying the message of AA and the programme to the still suffering alcoholic, both inside and outside of AA.*

*Randal (Editor)*

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## *Two lives*

I think of myself as having two lives - first before AA and one after AA. I finally surrendered to my alcoholism (hopefully, and God willing, for the last time) in July 2013. Up until then I had lived, fighting all areas of what I now know is a disease I can't fight at all.

I believe I was born an addict and it presented itself in most things, eventually in alcoholism. I am so grateful for AA and another Anon programme I am part of. I never felt part of the real world.

I now have the gift of both feeling part of the wonderful recovery community but also a part of life with others, most importantly my family. I regularly have peace of mind and serenity that which I never experienced on any real level prior to my recovery. I have a whole bag of tools to use daily and particularly at the times where serenity is lacking. I have many people available to me who will help me at any given time, including a very supportive wise sponsor. As I go further on this journey I get more clarity about how to be of

best service to my higher power and therefore to those around me. I learn more every single day.

I have a variety of meetings I attend. There is solid recovery at each and this is so valuable to me. I make time for prayer and reflection twice a day. I have clarity of mind to be aware of my defects of character and to now have some God given intuition if something does not feel right in terms of my behaviour.

I have wonderful literature to refer to both in books and electronically. I feel very blessed and on the days where I am less grateful I know that those days are still better than any of the chaotic sorrow filled

days I had before recovery. I now have a design for living, whereas, prior, to AA I spent my life constantly searching for other solutions. I am so grateful that I don't have to do this on my own. Thanks to Mainstay for providing an opportunity to share on my imperfect journey in this new life.

**Catherine**

**Mahu and Redwood Meetings,  
Christchurch**

*"I now have  
a design for  
living."*



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## ***Paul places a high value on, and is grateful for having a sponsor***

Hello Friends

My name is Paul and I am an alcoholic. In August the man who twelfth stepped me and was my sponsor for the past 28 years died after a short illness. He had just celebrated 55 years of sobriety at the time of his death. As you could imagine I really

miss him - he was so much a part of my recovery and also of my life. He taught me so much about living and in the end he taught me a lot about dying. I spoke to him every day during his illness and not once did he sound sorry for himself.

He was totally selfless. When the specialist gave him the sad news of his illness, he told me that he felt sorry for the specialist having to tell him such bad news! His first words to his wife and daughter were, "I am so pleased it's neither of you".

Early in our journey together when I did the third step, he weaned me off and made it clear I had to find a higher power of my

understanding. He always used to say, "don't forget I'm one too"!

I feel truly blessed and humbly grateful to have had a close relationship with this man and it has enabled me to form many other close relationships, especially in my family and with friends and those in turn that I sponsor. Defective relationships with others was always a problem for me (just as our 12x12 tells us). Every time I went to him

with a problem he directed me to the Big Book or 12x12 for the answer.

Never once did I put the phone down after talking to him without feeling better. Sponsorship is a huge part of my recovery. One alcoholic talking to another alcoholic

is how AA started and how it continues to thrive. The relief that I receive when I discuss a problem with my sponsor is a real reward - it seems to relieve the fear every time. In talking to my sponsor, I learnt to love and trust one human being and then, very gradually, to love and trust God. On the day of my sponsor's funeral I got another sponsor. I can't do this on my own even after all this time.

*"Never once did I put the phone down after talking to [my sponsor] without feeling better."*

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My sponsor had some great little quotes. I'll share just a few.

***The joy is in the journey***

***Anything half right is wrong***

***The truth will set you free***

***It's better to be free and happy than to be right***

***Just be a nobody***

With a heart full of gratitude for our wonderful programme, fellowship, and to having a sponsor.

**Paul D**

**Christchurch City  
Steps and Tuesday  
Night Big Book  
Study Group**

***Is this A Family  
Disease?***

My name is June and I'm a grateful alcoholic.

I will celebrate 29 years sober in just a few weeks' time, and Wow! How that time has flown. I remember (as if it were just yesterday) my very first meeting where I heard two people introduce themselves and say they hadn't had a drink for 4 years. It's all I remember from that first meeting, but I was amazed. I didn't want to stop

drinking for that long; I just desperately needed to be 'able' to stop. I couldn't even stop drinking for an hour, yet I had tried every day, always promising myself I wouldn't drink today, or I'd just 'have 2 or 3' but never could. How could 'they' have succeeded and for 4 whole years? Yes, right then and there I wanted what they had.

It wasn't to be an easy road for me, but that's because I didn't do the 'action' in those early days. I immediately stopped drinking, had a sponsor, sure, but what she said simply floated over my ego-inflated head. "Look at me, I don't drink anymore, I'm OK!"

Five years passed. I didn't really change too much from the

person I was before I stopped drinking. I didn't think I had to. Sure I was a much better person now than when I drank - that was very obvious to all. But as time passed and I thought I was 'cured' I stopped going to meetings too. I didn't pick up a drink (thank God!); I didn't even have an urge to BUT the rot had really set in and I was slipping away. Relationships began to crumble and my husband had

*"Yes, right  
then and there  
I wanted what  
they had."*

an affair...I was devastated. I desperately wanted the support of those loving people at AA. They would understand! I couldn't go back there though - they would all think I was drinking again, and I wasn't. So I struggled through and still managed to run my business, but emotionally I was a mess.

Sometimes when one is 'down to nothing' - God is 'up to something' and (thank you God) one of my family put herself into treatment at Hanmer and I went down to family week - not willingly, mind you. I didn't want to go through any more pain. I was going through enough and anyway. I was then 10 years sober, still full of puffed up pride but also terrible fear; fear of hearing what my family member would say about me, the sick drunk mother that I was and the stories of my behaviours that would be revealed; stories I wouldn't even remember because I was a daily 'blackout drinker'. I was very scared but most of all I was scared of what it might reveal to myself about myself.

Anyway, I didn't think my family member was an alcoholic. What was 'she' doing in treatment?

She didn't drink all day, every day like I did. She was a compulsive liar - yes, but not an alcoholic. I didn't know the disease of alcoholism was a family disease. I knew nothing because all I had done was 'stop drinking'. Nothing else, no 12 Step work; no service work.

What happened next was my 'Spiritual Awakening'. I fell onto my knees and asked God to help me. I came back to Nelson

with real hope in my heart. I had found my God at that family week and truly surrendered to him. I rediscovered AA, my sponsor, meetings and Service Work! Not just a little bit, a lot!

Doing something I didn't want to do worked for this

alcoholic. It keeps me on track today. I have had a lot of 'ups and downs' over the past years but the moment I started to (really) do the Steps, things changed and I changed. I know there is a solution and it involves action. I had always been a 3-stepper but my 4th and 5th steps were really the stepping stones to becoming the woman I have always wanted to be.

*"I fell onto my knees and asked God to help me."*

My Recovery has been as progressive as the disease itself and I have another family member in recovery now, so who said this was not a family disease?

**June D, Nelson**

***Kiley discovers she wanted what someone else had through the fellowship of AA***

Hi my name is Kiley and I'm an alcoholic. Recently I found it helpful reading a copy of Mainstay and mentioned it unknowingly to a mainstay rep and she suggested I write about my experience, strength, and hope in AA.

I feel very grateful that I discovered I was an alcoholic and AA is where I belong. I was having difficulty getting sober in another 12 step fellowship and had recently changed sponsors after seeing another member had gotten sober after many years of struggling. I wanted what she had and phoned her sponsor for

help. One of the first things she suggested I do was go to AA meetings. I had no idea why I was going but I was desperate and willing to do what was suggested.

The first thing that puzzled me was how much I related to the sharing in AA. The misery, the hopelessness, the anger, the anxiety and depression, the self-centredness, the selfishness, the fear, the resentment, just how

hard life felt and how much it felt like it wasn't working. What I didn't relate to initially was the drinking stories. I didn't really drink. The occasional wine, sip of spirits, I didn't like the taste of beer and couldn't tell you the last time I was drunk. Then I

heard a member share how they were clearly an alcoholic, was in their third time in AA and had at one point managed to stay away from that first drink for 15 years without coming to AA. It began to dawn on me it was possible to be an alcoholic and not actually be drinking...yet.

Today, I understand the progressive nature of this disease and for some of us there

*"I feel very grateful that I discovered I was an alcoholic and AA is where I belong."*

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was a point when we could stop drinking but I've read enough stories and heard enough sharing to now understand that eventually there comes a point, sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly, when every alcoholic loses the power of choice and has to drink. My life was a mess with the disease of alcoholism without adding the alcohol as well.

Today I choose to not take a drink one day at a time with the help of God, going to meetings, reading literature, talking regularly to my sponsor and others in recovery, trying to help someone else, doing as suggested, working the steps and each day, one day at a time my life has gotten better. I'm no longer crippled by fear and anxiety, and feeling overwhelmed with life. I'm happier, experience more serenity, have faith and trust in God. Thank you AA and Thank you God.

**Kiley**

*"My life was  
a mess with  
the disease  
of alcoholism  
without adding the  
alcohol as well."*

## ***Summer Sobriety***

Summertime in New Zealand. Barbeque season, and everyone seemingly, are holding barbecues in the backyard for their friends, relations, and any neighbours who might be bothered by the resultant sound of high-spirited revelry. Backyard cooking of burnt sausages, tough steak, and maybe even some sloshy coleslaw and best of all, copious quantities of booze.

So when you receive an invitation to such a soirée, it would be rude not to accept. Right? Well, no. Not for me as an alcoholic. In fact, they probably won't even register that I'm not there. "What, not going to the BBQ? What are ya? Some sort of piker?" And then my non-attendance will be forgotten. All the more booze for the other 'guests.' And when morning comes, no one will know (or care) that I wasn't there.

So, what do I do instead? Tough one, especially if I am new to sobriety. The sounds of drunken singing from over the fence sound so familiar, so much a part of summer living that I have grown accustomed to. The shrieks as someone gets dumped unceremoniously into



the swimming pool fully clothed and the laughter as they emerge, dripping and embarrassed, to run inside for a change of clothing. Oh yes, I remember it well. The music turned up full volume until well after midnight, the empty bottles hurled across the fence into my yard. The fights erupting into the street...



But I am an alcoholic and don't want to be part of that scene anymore. Is there a meeting I can go to? A member of the fellowship I can visit or even spend the night with until the next-door hangovers come out to play? Maybe a long walk in the balmy summer air when it all gets too much. The truth is, I don't have to participate to enjoy the evening. In fact, my hangover-free morning is definitely preferable to their misery as they set about cleaning up the wreckage of their event.

What I'm saying is that the old familiar playgrounds and playmates no longer work for me. My sobriety is worth more than that and I had better make a point of preserving it. Once lost, it may never be regained. The same principle is true of any function at any time of the year where intoxication is the primary objective. If I can't find a suitable alcathon to go to, I had better find some strategy to keep me from crossing the fence to where I used to be. My life depends on it.

**Andrew, Sanson**

### *Take it easy*

Hi. My name is Wayne and I am an alcoholic.

I came into A.A. 13 years ago with very little hope and no promise to live much longer. I thought I was too old and tired to go on. A.A. and GOD have changed all that.

At this time of writing, I am sitting on Tahananui Beach in Nelson, a reasonably content and happy man. The beauty of this country astounds me. I have done meetings in Auckland, Napier, Invercargill and Reefton, in fact all over the country. I enjoy the welcome and love everywhere,

not just in A.A.

Two sayings come to mind. "You must give it away to keep it" and "What you give out comes back to you"(good or bad). This disease is dangerous. Don't get me wrong, it can grab you at any stage, but I say travel with a light heart and enjoy life as much as you can.

I came into A.A. a broken man and to be honest it took years to change (Thanks GOD). I was mad without knowing it. Today I am an intelligent spiritual man who knows his own mind. I have given up "most" dreams of grandiosity and feel glad that I am alive.

I am a schizophrenic on medication. I know many of you have mental illnesses, so I talk to you. People meet me and I tell them I am a skitso-alty. Some feel sorry for me. Why? I say everyone has their burdens. Once I cleaned up and my mind became reasonably sound, my life changed.

GOD has granted me much peace and given me the opportunity to travel the country for near on 3 years carrying the message. I trust GOD implicitly and when I let him guide me and I trust my intuition, life works out exactly as it is meant to. I still have wild dreams and sometimes I step over the mark into places I

shouldn't venture, but more and more I live within the boundaries, that I believe, are set by GOD.

On closing, A.A. has changed my life from ordinary to extraordinary. I am gifted and have great hope for the future. I believe in eternity and GOD's grace. I am only alive and free through GOD's grace.

Have an open mind, be willing to trust and change. I love you all and hope to meet many more of you on life's journey.

TAKE IT EASY.

**Wayne (no fixed abode)**

*"You must  
give it away to  
keep it"*

*"What you  
give out  
comes back to  
you"(good or  
bad).*



# Rolling Over

Dear Readers,

I have had the privilege of service in the Mainstay team since 2006 and so it is well overdue that this role is rolled over in keeping with the traditions of our fellowship.

It has been a wonderful journey and I have learnt so much, especially from my mistakes which were many. I began over zealously in the early days and included content that was not AA. I made some serious typo errors, forgot to edit some letters, and perhaps over edited others. My deepest apologies to all for these errors.

Luckily a few years later, the team expanded and the responsibility of content fell to the others in the team. This meant I could focus on the fun job of layout and design, but now this job too must roll over.

I am grateful for the opportunity I have had, highly encourage anyone who is interested in this unique form of service to contact GSO, and finally, I wish the future Mainstay team all the very best.

Toni x



# Mainstay Positions Vacant

The Board is seeking an Assistant Editor and Production Coordinator for Mainstay.

## *Assistant Editor*

The Assistant Editor responsibilities include:

- Gather letters/articles for Mainstay (Most will be forwarded from GSO or other team members)
- Proof reading
- Write the 'Dear members' editorial each month, in collusion with editor/production team
- Promote Mainstay at meetings, Intergroup and among AA network.
- Ask AA members for contributions – letters up to 600 words, articles, events notices and reports – for the area.
- Encourage individuals and groups to subscribe to Mainstay – including sponsored subscriptions, and subs into institutions.

## *Production Coordinator*

The Production Coordinator must be able to produce a print ready document from the letters, editorial, news and other contributions to Mainstay within timeframes. This involves:

- The ability to type up letters and obtain text from a variety of formats emails etc.
- Ability in deciphering 'gibberish', and editing to create a usable text in the sharing section of the magazine.
- The ability to glean information from flyers, websites etc.
- Finding appropriate images to augment the messages throughout the magazine.
- Sending a print ready file to the 'Print Coordinator'



# THE NEXT FRONTIER



## **Alcoholics Anonymous 53rd Annual Convention**

**January 22, 23 & 24 2016**

**Millenium-Copthorne Resort, Waitangi**

Registrations are now open for the 51st Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Registrations can be made via:

**Website : [www.aaconvention.org.nz](http://www.aaconvention.org.nz)**

Please note the website will only accept registrations paid at the time of registering with a credit card.

If you do not wish to pay by credit card, you need obtain the event flyer, or print a copy from the website, complete your details then mail the completed form and your cheque to:

**Host Planning Committee**

**PO Box 555**

**Kaitaia 0441**

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# AA meetings on air

*You can hear all the meetings so far at*

*<http://www.aamembers.org.nz/meetings/meetings-on-air>*



Or listen on **104.6 FM** between **10:45 to 11:15** every **Sunday**



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# AA Events

*Events for promotion in Mainstay must be received by GSO (events@aa.org.nz) by 30th January to ensure inclusion in the next issue of Mainstay.*

## **31 December 2015**

### **AA New Year's Eve Summer Party**

*Freemans Bay Community Centre*

*52 Hepburn Street, Freemans Bay, Auckland*

*5pm: BBQ dinner, 8pm: Meeting, 9pm: Fellowship and dancing*

*Bring: Your kids, games, picnic blanket, cash for drinks*

*Contact: Rexina 0275335500, rexinaaa@gmail.com*

## **22 - 24 January 2016**

### **Alcoholics Anonymous 53rd Annual Convention**

*See flier in this publication.*

## **7 February 2016**

### **4 Speaker Panel Meeting**

*Hanmer Clinic, 1235 Cameron Road, Greerton, Tauranga 3112*

*An open meeting of AA where four members of the fellowship share their experience, strength and hope on a chosen subject. Meetings will be held every three months and everyone is welcome. The meetings begin at midday on the first Sunday of February, May, and August. There will be a shared lunch served after 1pm and donations will be gratefully received.*

*Contact Wayne: 0212215987*

# Subscriptions

# Ordered	Type of subscription	Price (inc GST & PP)
	<b>Individual</b> subscription for 12 months	\$30.00
	<b>Group</b> subscription for 12 months	\$30.00
	<b>Sponsored</b> subscription for 12 months	\$24.00
	<b>Sponsored</b> subscription for 6 months	\$12.00
	<b>Overseas</b> subscription for 12 months	\$40.00

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Post Mainstay to (name and address)	
Send invoice to (name and address)	
Group's name (if order is for a group)	
Contact Phone number and/or email address	

## Post completed order and payment to:

Mainstay at GSO, Po Box 6458, Wellington 6141  
or email your details to: [nzgso@aa.org.nz](mailto:nzgso@aa.org.nz)



# The 12 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 nonprofessional, 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.*





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.