

MAINSTAY

Carrying the message



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.*

Mainstay is the magazine of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand. It's our 'meeting in print' reflecting a broad spectrum of current AA experience in recovery, unity, and service.

Mainstay only publishes letters and articles relating to AA and alcoholism and publication does not imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or Mainstay. Mainstay aims to be self-supporting and is not affiliated to any outside groups or interests and does not accept paid advertising. There is no payment for contributions and they cannot be returned.

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are asked to include their first name, locality and a contact telephone number or email/physical address (not for publication).

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CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Readers feedback	3
Sharing	4
Special feature	16
Service in the fellowship	19
Book review	23
Item of interest	25
Events	31
Subscriptions	32

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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.

Responsibility declaration

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.

Editorial

Kia ora everybody, a year ago we could not have imagined these last few months. Aren't we lucky that we aim at living our lives one day at a time? That, just for today, we've been able to handle everything COVID-19 has thrown at the world.

Could your home group send Mainstay a small piece outlining how, and why, you decided to open an online meeting, or put your meeting into recess. What have been the pros and cons of doing that? What happened to the 7th tradition for your group? Did you have any newcomers arrive during this time? I believe these subjects, and anything else, would create an interesting, combined article that could be sent to all groups. As Bill and Bob always said 'pass it on' and I'm happy to collate such an article so we can learn from each other - either through the pages of Mainstay, or as a document that could be sent to all groups via your area assembly.

Are you aware that NZGSO sends occasional newsletters with items of interest, and often of vital interest, to all members who have signed up to receive it? To be on the mailing list go to our website (www.aa.org.nz) scroll down where it suggests you 'Sign up to our mailing list. Stay up to date with the latest news and offerings from A.A.'

The item of interest in this issue is about the New Zealand justice system and their alcohol and other drugs courts. There has often been controversy about people being mandated to attend our meetings, something that has been happening around the world for many, many years. I'm sure this article will make us all think, and maybe even provoke some 'feedback' to Mainstay. (We have a section especially for feedback in our magazine).

We hope all non-subscribers to Mainstay valued their free (April-May) electronic magazine - this was sent to all who had signed up on our members page to receive such updates.

Our special section this month is about gratitude, and I'm sure many have been very grateful to how Alcoholics Anonymous has handled things during this time. It's been hard for AA around the world to cancel events that they had worked for many years to organise, and we thank all those host planning committees for their service. We also thank the many members who learnt how to host online meetings - Bill and Bob would not have envisioned such a thing when they said (chapter 7) 'To be helpful is our only aim.' In fellowship,

Heather H. Editor

Reader's feedback

Want to comment on Mainstay, in Mainstay?

Please send your thoughts to feedbackmainstay@aa.org.nz

Alcoholics Anonymous was started around 80 years ago following the Great Depression of the 1930's.

The only solution for the suffering alcoholic was an institution. The rest is history following the meeting of two alcoholics and the beginning of a solution, and in due course, AA. Since then millions of alcoholics around the world have been saved through a fellowship and a program devised and formalised in adverse circumstances.

Today, we have the pandemic of 2020 and we are living it. Right now, we are at the epi-centre of this raging virus, where the epi-centre is the whole world.

These times will be spoken of and debated for years to come. No one knows how this will play out. There is wide ranging speculation and scientific models, but the variables are too many and largely unknown.

As we pass from stage 4 to stage 3 and eventually back to ground zero, we are in new territory. How the world will look is anyone's guess, but it will be vastly different.

This then is a unique opportunity for AA to make a difference. Right now, we can be planning for the inevitable consequences of this situation, i.e., there may be a vast number who will 'turn to the bottle'. What an opportunity to get our message out there – to a whole new population of problem drinkers - that there is a solution. This time not just from two men who happened to meet up, but from a worldwide movement of alcoholics. Group Conscience, Intergroup, and Assemblies could be utilised to facilitate this new opportunity, to discuss and formulate plans at every level to reach out to the suffering alcoholic. There must be heaps of ideas and possibilities out there ('pop up' meetings, portable paraphernalia, new formats), and right now might be the time to consider this.

Gill

Redwoodtown, Blenheim

12th Step Letters

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now.

*Mainstay editorial policy is to accept and publish letters from members of AA who wish to share their experience, strength, and hope. The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions. Mainstay does not publish anything unrelated to AA or that violates the principles of AA. Sensitivity and discretion will be used to maintain the integrity of the original correspondence. Please submit your sharing in word-processed or email format, or **legible hand writing**. Digitally submitted sharing should be in Word .doc/.docx format or rich text only please. We accept graphics and photos in most standard formats (please use a high resolution for clarity).*

Dear Mainstay...

Acceptance Is the key

In As Bill Sees It, page 44 it reads, "Our very first problem is to accept our present circumstances as they are, ourselves as we are, and the people about us as they are. This is to adopt a realistic humility without which no genuine advance can even begin. Again, and again, we shall need to return to that unflattering point of departure. This is an exercise in acceptance that we can profitably practice every day of our lives".

I had learnt a lot about acceptance over the course of my journey in sobriety starting with the most basic and first acceptance; total acceptance of my alcoholism, with no reservations and a sure knowledge I was beaten. I found it easy to admit my life was unmanageable but admitting to

being powerless over alcohol took a little longer. I probably, in the beginning of my journey, thought getting sober was all I had to do so the next level of acceptance for me was that to stay sober I had to alter a lot of attitudes and working the steps was the best way to achieve that. Over time and with practise, accepting my faults and being willing to change became easier. The rewards of sobriety such as an improved life, serenity, and self-respect made the journey worthwhile and I learnt to embrace change and have the courage to look at my faults as an opportunity to grow.

After 23 years I have to admit life was really good for me as I enjoyed success in business, I was happy in life but I had settled into a routine where I did not challenge myself as much as previously. I worked my program doing one meeting a

week and my higher power and I were on good terms but not in daily contact. I then got seriously ill with a debilitating virus which put me in hospital for 3 months and left me unable to walk when I came out of hospital. I learnt to walk again and got back to work but struggled. I was told I had an 80% chance of a full recovery so worked hard to get that recovery. What was strange when I look back was, I did not hand over to my Higher Power but was focused on having control.

Two years later I learn that there will be no full recovery for me and while I could walk now using a walking stick from the knees down my muscles would not work again.

I was still struggling with work so finished up. Around this time, I started to have explosions of temper.

Totally out of character but damaging for my marriage.

My serenity much valued over my sobriety was gone. Not once did I think about having a drink because I was still in total acceptance of my powerlessness and I remembered what my first sponsor used to say to me, "Russ there is nothing happening in your life right now, as bad as you might think it is, you cannot make worse by picking up a drink". I did decide I needed some professional help, so I went to a

counsellor.

What I learnt besides reaffirming the wisdom of reaching for help when you need to is, I was missing acceptance. It turned out that over the years of sobriety life had seen me become successful in my work career so I had senior positions where I made decisions, I had a comfortable life and free of alcohol I was independent. I had become used to being in control of my life and the illness had taken away my sense of independence.

Anger was my response. It seems that being angry is a compensation for feeling a loss of power, anger makes us feel powerful. I do remember when I think back, I was angry a lot when I was in active alcoholism so maybe there is a truth in it.

What did happen is I learnt to accept my situation and I made changes in my life to accommodate my new circumstances. With that I also fixed up the lack of communication with my mate, the Higher Power. I asked him to guide me. Well I went past 28 years sober early this year and I do not think life has ever been better for me. Bill was right, acceptance is the key and we do sometimes need to go back to it.



Russell B

A new perspective

Two weeks before New Zealand's COVID-19 nationwide lockdown, a couple of friends and I went to an Area Assembly in Taranaki. I am fortunate that my work allows me access to lighthouses around New Zealand so I thought we could drive out to visit Cape Egmont Lighthouse on the way back. We set off on the Sunday morning, joking about self-isolating in the lighthouse, on the way.

It was quiet when we got to the lighthouse, save for one campervan of tourists. The door opened easily and my friend and I climbed to the top. It was a steep and dusty climb but the view was amazing when we got there. We took some photos and said the Serenity Prayer. It was lovely to be able to see the world from another angle.

Coming back down and locking the door, we made our way back to the car. It was getting hot and we were keen to get back on the road. At the car I reached to get the car keys out of my backpack but it was gone. Yes, I had locked the backpack in the lighthouse. And the keys to open the lighthouse and the car were in the backpack! It was like the plot from a bad movie. Here we were on a beach on a Sunday in

the middle of nowhere with no food, no water and no keys to get into the car or the lighthouse! I could feel the panic rising in me. What to do? Do I call the other AA and get them to come and break into my car? Do we get a ride with the tourists back to New Plymouth?

I stopped and took a deep breath and handed it over. I felt something come over me, like a sense that everything would be okay, if I just let go. One of my friends called a locksmith. He agreed to come all

the way (an hour's journey) to help us on a Sunday. I also called my manager who seemed unfazed by the whole thing and told me to break the lock with a hammer. Luckily, I was able to use my programme to keep it simple and focus on one course of action – to be patient and

to follow through with waiting for the locksmith to come as planned. Meanwhile the tourists kindly gave us some water, food and a loo roll! so we were sorted until the locksmith came along.

In the meantime, I focused on being of service to tourists coming up to the lighthouse. With a clipboard in my hand, they thought I was a tour guide so I offered to take photos of them and to direct them safely past the bull in the neighboring field. The



old me would have been angry and resentful and probably walking half-way to New Plymouth at that point.

90 minutes later the locksmith arrived. 20 minutes later the task was complete. He said we were lucky it was not the following day which was Taranaki anniversary day and was scheduled to rain! We eventually made it back to Wellington at 7:00pm that night. A few plans had to be broken and changed amongst my friends and their families but everyone did well with handing it over and going with the flow.

Looking back on that day, I believe I had a spiritual awakening of sorts. Gazing at the world from the top of the lighthouse, I learned that stepping back and looking at things from another perspective can make a world of a difference.

In gratitude,

Dear Mainstay,

My name is Janene and I am an alcoholic.

I grew up in an alcoholic home with both parents afflicted with this rapacious disease. It was “once were warriors, but with all the frills “. My darling mother, bless her soul,

sobered up at a time when really there were only the ‘down and out’s’ in AA and having come from a privileged background she really had to swallow her pride. She had 30 wonderful years before she died too early. My father never sobered up.

I was so lucky to experience her recovery and all the wonderful work she did. I even assisted her sometimes on a call out. Sadly, I was not to know of my own demise. I drank until I was 40 years of age through a 16 year marriage & two children.

As the marriage disintegrated, I went on to have geographical moves and searching for love in ‘all the wrong places.’ I attempted suicide but was too gutless and the thought of my children (not

living with me at the time) saved my life. I was bereft, I had a hole in myself that the wind blew through but still I continued to drink. After many moves and lost relationships, I finally asked myself the question “maybe, just maybe it’s me and not them?” It was the catalyst for the journey I was about to embark on.

I called my mother (who I really had been avoiding denial!) and we met the next day and talked at depth, she asked me “where



Grace
Wellington

I would be in the next 5 years?
“This shocked and frightened me. She went on to explain that it was the behaviour and wonky thinking that made up an alcoholic. I was shocked and said to her “but I thought it was the alcohol”.

She said “no, it’s both”. I said” so I must be an alcoholic!” She said, “you have no idea how long I have waited to hear you say this.” I couldn’t intervene, I had to let you go and let it run its course.”

Lucky for me I had had the grounding with her earlier so I knew she could help me one way or the other.

I took to AA like a fox terrier with a bone. I threw myself into my sobriety like nothing I had done before, and I had 5 precious years with her before she died.

I owe my life to her.

I owe AA my life.

I have had nearly 28 years sober. It has not always been easy, but I would never go back (God willing) I know too much to ever want to go back.

The peace and serenity I have as a result are priceless

I am blessed.

Janene
Christchurch.

A confirmed alcoholic

Hi all. Lionel here, a confirmed alcoholic which is only a nice way to say that I am a common garden variety drunk who hasn’t had a drink today.

I am sober today, mainly through not picking up the next drink (God only knows how).

I used to have a t-shirt that said, “I don’t have a drinking problem. I drink, get drunk, fall down. No problem.

Very short drunk-a-log; drinking was fun, then fun with problems and finally, problem drinking, or glad, mad, bad, sad drinking, very quickly.

As in Chap 3 of the Big Book I tried many ways to drink “like a gentleman”. Nothing worked until I actually

followed Chap 5, “Rarely have we seen a person fail” Etc. I also believed that I was truly one of the lost ones.

My Higher Power had to send me to my knees by nearly taking my wife away from me. At the time our only child (daughter) was 4 years old. My wife was in hospital with drips and ventilators and I purchased a box of ‘stubbies’ on the way home from hospital on a cold winter’s Saturday night. As I opened my



first 'stubby' I thought "what am I doing? My wife nearly died and here I was a drunken bum of a father who couldn't look after himself may have had to look after his 4-year-old daughter."

I finally realised I couldn't do this on my own and got down on my knees and asked the "Universe" for help. I felt an energy go through and a sense that I would never drink again, BUT it would not be easy and I would have to work hard for my sobriety. I then proceeded to tip out all the stubbies I had just bought and this was painful for a still active alcoholic.

This was a time there was no Sunday trading what so ever! No bars open or off-licences available. I woke up Sunday morning panicking. However, I have not had a drink since then.

Nothing bad has ever happened to me in AA and for me the 12 promises have come true and the best is yet to come.

I am writing this on the eve of my wife's (soulmate's) birthday, who passed away nearly 6 years ago. On her death bed she tried to get me to promise I wouldn't undo all our hard work by drinking again. I said I couldn't do that but promised I would be sober until I saw her off.

I shared this at my Friday Night homegroup. A very good friend rang

me the next day and asked me this, "What is different today about the reason you gave up drinking all those years ago?". I got angry, slammed the phone down and cursed her severely, but as we say, "we are not responsible for our first thought etc". When I calmed down, I knew she was right even when I was cursing her. I always said that if I ever picked up again it was simply because I am an alcoholic who strayed from the AA program. This was the test of my life.



AA has given me many tools to use in the face of adversity. The one that came in handy at this time of my life was "my God never gives me more than I can handle, UNLESS He wants me to hand it back."

Since being a committed member of AA I have not had any bad times. I have had rough times, tough times and yes very sad times.

My wife gave me great gifts whilst alive and even greater gifts after being called home. I wouldn't have all these great gifts if I didn't have a wife who loved me and believed in me when I couldn't believe in myself. And of course all the AA friends along the way that guided me and yes argued with me.

For me today I know that it will be alright in the end and, if it is not alright, it is not THE END!!!!

Lionel

Friday Night Serenity Group Tauranga

Resentments

There was an old-timer in one of my meetings who, whenever someone complained about this, that or the other, would mildly ask, "How important is it, really?" Mostly the response was unresolved and unjustified anger over some minor issue that had become an obsession.

I have very little cause for complaint in my life today but that was not always so. Things that I did not immediately classify as resentments such as hostility towards my boss (and his boss), my drunken neighbour who would bang on my door at 5 :30 am to bum a cigarette, oh yeah, plenty of things to raise my hackles and inspire resentment. Even in AA there have been times when I wished someone would just go elsewhere.

The problem was not in having the feelings; the problem lay in retaining them, in re-feeling them, over and over again without ever addressing the cause. Eventually I realised that the problem was not

the person, place or thing but my attitude towards it. So the cause of my resentment and consequent unhappiness was not the target that I was blaming, but me. The apparent cause was of very little importance; it was my mind that magnified it into an issue worth nurturing a resentment for.

Big things we are forced to confront and deal with. It is the little things that we allow to niggle within that eventually grow legs and become full-blown resentment. And it is those things that will take me back

to the bottle, if and only if, I allow them to. These days when I find my knickers in a twist over something, I have to ask myself in the words of that old-timer, "How important is it, really?" So often the answer is that it is not of any great importance at

all and that what has been harmed is not my person but my sensitive little feelings, the perceived threat to my social standing (!) or how I fear others will perceive me. All about pride and fear. I read the consequence of the action rather than the consequence of my resentment of it.

If I am living the program, rather than just remembering it, these so-called resentments tend to evaporate like steam. I don't have to live with a heart full of angst if

**KEEP
IT
SIMPLE**

I don't want to. In the words of another old-timer, "I must constantly remind myself that my peace of mind depends on the attitude that I adopt to circumstances as they arise." Steps 6, 7 and 11 help with that.

Andrew A
Alkie in Feilding

I rang the AA phone number

at around 2.00am. The woman who answered the phone told me to ring back in the morning when I was sober. What an outfit I thought!

The next morning, terribly dry, stinking and with a throbbing headache I rang the woman back, to this day I am grateful that for once my stubbornness served me. God was already working his magic in my life, before I even knew him.

After she checked if I meant business, she told me to catch a bus to the Christchurch Square. There I met an old lady (probably about my age now) in one of those tiny cars whose doors open the wrong way. She took me to around half a dozen AA member's homes. Each one shared their experience strength and hope with me at their kitchen table. I was just wondering why these people were telling me their problems, couldn't they see I was the one who needed help! Through the fog one man my age reached me in my alcoholic uniqueness. He

was from a farm and I related to his loneliness. He was a new member in the fellowship.

The woman then said "we are off to a meeting", I think it was in Riccarton. She stopped off at the TAB on the way. I was very judgmental! At the meeting I could not hear anyone and people seemed to be grey. I felt very sorry for you all. This is not for me I thought, I'm not that bad 'yet'.

After the meeting some people approached me which surprised me no end. They spoke kindly and put a cup of coffee and a sweet biscuit into my shaking hands.

When the woman dropped me home she said "I will help you in any way I can, but you need to reach out to me, here is my number".

I never called the woman back. In fact sadly I do not even recall her name, but I will never forget her. Through her selfless service she planted a seed in this hopeless alcoholic which would later flower into a contented sobriety and a feeling that life had purpose and meaning.

I try to repay this woman my gratitude by never being too busy to go to a 12 step call. I try to follow the guidelines of taking another female member with me as my sponsor took me in the early days. This is for safety but also to pass on what I was given. We say a prayer in the car beforehand, which reminds me who the healer

is - not me. When the person we have tried to help does not respond and I do not see them again, I try to remember that God moves in mysterious ways and leave it at that. I need to hear myself share my story for the new comer, it works when other things fail.

Covid 19 level 4 & 3 prevent face to face 12 step calls, but Mainstay and the new zoom meetings give me the opportunity to share my hope with the same shivering person I was. I pray that I am as welcoming and kind as the members at my first meeting.

Rose P
Marlborough

Hi, I'm Sue and I'm an alcoholic

In an early memory I am sitting on the laundry bench watching my mother do the washing. As she worked, Mum sang a popular song of the time that began, "When I was just a little girl, I asked my mother, what will I be?"

When asked what she thought I might become, Mum offered many a rosy scenario. However, despite knowing drinking problems ran in our family, that list didn't include alcoholic.

Even a decade before getting sober in my early fifties, taking the brave step of addressing my alcoholism was definitely not in

my future picture. But it was and I did, and that action stands as the most significant step I've ever taken toward self love and acceptance. It saved my life, and returned life to me and me to life.

As the tale unfolds, I am in my late 30's, happy and a successful professional woman who drank only as a rare treat. Around that time I met a new man and soon adapted to the drinking culture in which he socialised, by which I mean I capitulated to it. Like a true alcoholic, deep down I lacked confidence, so instead of sticking to my modest drinking ways, I let alcohol support me in keeping pace and face in this new, wine-loving crowd.

By my late forties and having moved in with my man, I was keeping pace all right, but having trouble keeping alcohol in its place. Unlike the others, I wasn't drinking to savour a good drop, rather to numb uncomfortable feelings as soon as possible. When life in my new home began to present a few challenges, alcohol helped there too, and I indulged in increasingly heavy doses of palliative care from the bottom shelf of the fridge each evening.

The alcoholism my mother had neglected to mention was triggered, although few would have guessed it. On the outside I appeared happy and confident, but on the inside I was deeply miserable and out of control.

Depression had set in and I was dogged by an overwhelming sense of loneliness, futility and worthlessness. Alcohol was the only thing that made me feel alive and engaging again and became my refuge when relationship troubles developed and business dried up. The greater the troubles, the more I drank. The more I drank, the more difficult to live and work with I became.

I now shunned social engagements, preferring to party at home, my dear friend Sav Blanc heading the guest list. During the first phase of our nightly ritual we would embark on Sue-support sessions. Sav would relax me, release me from worries and anaesthetise pain and shame. Loneliness would disappear and I was free to be myself with my closest buddy.

As the evening sloshed on and we entered phase two, our conversation would turn. Reflecting on my problems, Sav and I would concur that I'd been hard done by on every count. The list of those to blame would be rolled out, Sav and I going through it, item by item, in the light of the angry fire I was building.

Having helped me to a frenzy of self pity and resentment, phase three would begin and Sav would do the unthinkable. At the height of my dependence on her, she would leave - at least the effect of her would, no matter how much more I drank.

Toward the end of my drinking career, Sav would take her booze-buddy support away progressively earlier in the piece, the vacuum being filled by another, less likeable drinking companion. This pathetic wretch felt alone and hopeless, and try as I might to wash her away with yet another glass of wine, she'd hold fast.

My days were now characterised by the bitter battle every alcoholic knows. On waking remorseful I would vow not to drink today – or to drink less – but every evening would see me powerless against the pull to the bottle store or wine rack. Thankfully I recognised that the point had come at which I must choose between continuing to destroy myself and my loved ones, or facing up to my problems and electing life beyond them.

You would have had to pay me thousands to walk through the door for my first AA meeting had I not been so desperate. I was terrified, but not as terrified as I was by where my drinking was taking me.

Immediately I was struck by how normal everyone looked, and how happy. As each shared their story of alcohol abuse, they would tell a little of mine, and I was comforted by that honesty. None judged another as they spoke, even with talk of relapses or crimes committed under the influence. They were at this meeting for one purpose – to get free of alcohol and help others in the room to do the same.

AA's well- established programme had helped millions before me, so with a sigh of relief at having found a place, people and regime that understood and supported me, I began my recovery.

Changes were apparent several days into the programme and sobriety. To begin with, my physical health returned and rushes of natural 'high' filled me on an increasingly regular basis. Day by day, I began to feel and look like the Sue of old.

One day it dawned on me that the strange emotion I was experiencing was happiness, and some weeks on I realised hope had made its way back. We had been strangers for many years, we three, while I searched fruitlessly for them in the depths of a bottle.

I started to appreciate simple things again, like nature, time to myself and being with people I loved. Work became immensely more enjoyable as motivation and focus returned, and because I no longer felt ashamed, contentment also got its chance to flourish. However, perhaps the most profound change was in the way I related to others. As I became more positive, contributing and authentic, others responded in kind, and I started to have fun – real fun.

Far from being the tortuous path I expected, recovery has been a refreshing and rewarding journey. Not a day goes by, now, without

another miracle of understanding, and while my mother may not have wished this path for me, personally I can't get enough of it.

Sue H,

Whangarei Heads Monday night group, Whangarei

“When I am willing to do the right thing I am rewarded with an inner peace no amount of liquor could ever provide. When I am unwilling to do the right thing, I become restless, irritable, and discontent. It is always my choice.”

Alcoholics Anonymous p.317

A vibrant background featuring a variety of tropical leaves in shades of green, yellow, and blue. The leaves are stylized and layered, creating a lush, jungle-like atmosphere. A large, dark green circle is centered on the page, containing the main text.

An opportunity for Twelfth Step work

**Share your experience, strength & hope
with people who can't get to meetings**

Topics can include spirituality – steps – traditions
– concepts – service – sponsorship – carrying the
message.

Send to GSO with *Mainstay*
in the subject line.

mainstay@aa.org.nz

Subscribe to
Mainstay,
New Zealand's
magazine.

Special feature - Gratitude

An honest regret for harms done, a genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets we shall seek.

Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Kia Ora Mainstay!

Firstly, a huge congratulations to those who have put together the new Mainstay format and online offering, which looks amazing!

Secondly, a huge thanks to those who have toiled for years and years to keep Mainstay going in good times and bad which has been nothing short of miraculous. Thank you for your dedication and service.

Lock Down has been an interesting time for all of us, to say the least. I am amazed and grateful that the Fellowship adapted so quickly to create online meetings for us all to attend. While nothing beats a physical meeting, an online one is a close second and so thank you to those who have worked so hard to get their meetings online and to those who've ensured the website is in great shape.

I am a grateful alcoholic today for several reasons; I am not drinking today. I hate to think what Lock Down would have been like had I been in active alcoholism. The fear that I would not get enough

would have had me queuing up at the supermarket day and night. Then there would be the isolation - the alcoholic's second-best friend following the drink. As it is, I am happy swapping one set of track pants for another each day but imagine what drinking through that would be like? I imagine I would be wallowing in resentments of years gone by, listening to sad songs and lamenting what might have been, making drunken calls to anyone who would pick up the phone. It would have been all about me, 24/7.

Today I am pleased to report that thanks to being active in service in AA, attending online meetings, staying in touch with alcoholics on the phone and practicing the Steps and prayer daily, I am getting through this Lock Down pretty well. I have been focussing on staying in the moment, which is like a living meditation and practice of Step 11 all through the day - not something that comes naturally to me. I am so often several weeks ahead trying to think my way around any possible scenario and imagining the worst. Today I can say that I am sober, and

I am grateful and that is enough. I have learned that resentment lives in the past and fear lives in the future. Neither fear nor resentment are in the present moment. The present moment is where love and the Higher Power are. The present moment is all we truly have.

God bless you all and looking forward to catching up with you online or in person on the other side.

In Fellowship,

Sarah F,
Nelson

When someone leaves AA

Just a quick share to let you know how it was for me (in my first year) when someone went out and did more research to see if they qualified for AA – some of whom came back: most of whom didn't.

When I heard someone was drinking again, or came back and said they'd been drinking, it felt as if I had been punched in the stomach. It was so physical that I almost doubled over and it really worried me.

I was concerned that I would drink too. There seemed to be no reason for their drinking, so I was sure I too would more-than-likely drink too. That one day I would just find a drink in my hand for no reason.

Thanks goodness I slowly found out it was not like that. I soon was able to see patterns in those who went out again. Some of the common ones were: no sponsor; no Big Book; no working the steps, no helping others and meetings attendance was often reduced.

Of course, to my surprise, our BB does not say don't drink! In fact, it tells us if we are not convinced to go and try again, to try some controlled drinking. (BB p.31/32)

Another thing I thought (thinking was always my problem!!!) was that I had "to carry the message" to those people or, as the Toronto declaration says "when anyone anywhere reaches out for help I want the hand of AA to be there" – but luckily I soon found more information that was helpful to me.

One, I couldn't give away what I hadn't got, (see page 164) and two, hanging out with those drinking or slipping, was dangerous to me. All I really had to do was stay sober myself, start, and keep working the steps, (So I had something to give away) and therefore carry the best message I could ... that I was sober through the AA programme. Showing, if I (we) can stay sober, so can you

When AA talks about 'we' in the BB it was saying - this is what we early members did and how we got well. So those actions (steps) is what I did and do, the same as those first 80 plus members did. (Or as Bill W

said 'we are more than 100 men and women')

So, remember our best message to carry is proof that our Alcoholics Anonymous programme works by staying sober through doing the steps ourselves.

I have stayed sober one day at a time for many days now, and hope my experience, strength and hope on this topic of slips is of use to you.

Luckily AA says our door swings both way so people can leave and come back. Some meetings chant a treatment-centre (non-AA) saying at the end of their meetings, 'Keep coming back it works if you work at it'. However, what AA says is (another promise) 'they will always materialize if we work FOR them". P.84 BB

So, I say, not to keep-coming-back, but don't leave! Especially don't leave before the miracle happens.

I'm really grateful the miracle happened for me,

*Anonymous,
Christchurch*

Thanks AA

Thanks to the Grace of God and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous I have not needed or wanted to pick up a drink today. And for that I am extremely grateful.

Its lockdown in Christchurch March 2020 and a new way of life for us all at the moment. I cannot go to

the meetings I would normally go to; I can't visit my sponsor or have my sponsees visit me, work is off limits and I haven't seen the kids or grandchildren for a week. And what's more it could be another few weeks before those things return.

However I now have plenty of time for prayer to my loving God, I am reading stories in the big book I have never read, there are heaps of online meetings I can attend, my sponsor is only a phone call away (my sponsees aren't calling me, they must be well), my wife and I have video-called the kids and one grandchild and there are a number of little jobs to do around our house.

A week ago my wife and I made a list of things and thoughts that would help us through: we would be more mindful of our ups and downs during our lockdown, practice a great degree of love and tolerance, we would walk every day, visit my father in law everyday (he is in our bubble), and be kind to each other.

My daily list included a little more time in prayer and meditation, attending an online meeting every day, ring 1 or 2 AAs every day, read a new story from our Big Book, ring my sponsor, exercise every day,

So, now that I am not consumed with the business of life, I have more time for the very things that got me well in the first place.

A big thank you to GSO and the Board for keeping us up to date

and making those online meetings available. Also, to those wonderful members who have set up those meeting that help us all stay connected to each other and our own Higher power.

God bless,

Paul H

Service in the Fellowship

*Have something to say on this or other key topics we often discuss in AA, at meetings and with each other? Please send in your story, with the topic in the heading as; 'Special feature - *topic*'*

Topics for the special feature in future editions are listed below.

<i>August/ September</i>	<i>Our slogans</i>
<i>October/ November</i>	<i>Traditions</i>
<i>December/ January</i>	<i>Sober Travel/ Holidays</i>
<i>February/ March</i>	<i>Concepts</i>
<i>April/May</i>	<i>Steps</i>
<i>June/July</i>	<i>Sponsorship</i>
<i>August/ September</i>	<i>Service and Me</i>
<i>October/ November</i>	<i>Traditions</i>
<i>December/ January</i>	<i>Trudging the Road</i>

What has your board been doing in the past 12 months?

- A networked accounting system which means board members can come from any part of the country and contribute to the behind the scenes running of GSO. Our old system was about to completely expire with no way to renew it so this has given GSO a great future.
- A new AA website for the whole of New Zealand which has initially focused on carrying the message to the newcomer. Making sure the newcomer section was easy to follow and smartphone friendly as this is the method of choice for our younger people to contact us and access meetings. Traffic to the website has doubled since the pandemic and we are blessed we have the new website as the previous one would not have coped.
- Developing the help@aa.org.nz email. This is an important

tool in this age and builds on from the 0800 phone lines. We have seen a doubling of emails asking for help since the lockdown/rahui was put in place. We have also just appointed Nell as our new Help email co-ordinator. We had so many applications thanks so much everyone.

- A website meeting app which is built into the website and can be used on ALL smartphones and allows everyone to be able to access meetings.
- Martin responded quickly with the help of the rest of the board to allow access to zoom meetings via the website during the pandemic so that we can still meet with each other and carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. The Mainstay sub-committee wrote and actioned a plan to give Mainstay a fair go at being self-supporting so that we can decide if this is something the fellowship really wants. It will be evident in the number of subscriptions (online and or magazine form) that come in.
- Better communication to you our fellowship via our newsletter function on our website www.aa.org.nz which is at the bottom of

the members drop down on the website, <https://aa.org.nz/members/> and if you have joined up you will know everything that is happening. It has been particularly useful since the pandemic was declared to get information out to the fellowship

- Employed a new staff member with procedural and administration skills to help us create some useful systems for GSO to maintain our services into the future.
- Nic has written procedures for all systems she has rebuilt so that anyone can walk into GSO and run the office even if there is no one to teach them.
- Nic has been invaluable in creating and updating our database as the old one had not been updated and had many people still on it who had passed away up many years ago. This is making mass communication with members easier and has been a valuable asset in recent times.
- Along with your Board taking on more responsibilities the implementation of better systems in GSO and adopting technology to maximise efficiencies has seen a roll on effect for the membership not only in better services but a saving in the costs of

running GSO with labour hours down from 47 hours per week to 27 hours per week so the donations go further in reaching the still suffering alcoholic.

- Created a storage system for all our documents and decision making for both conference and board systems which allows us to track changes as a board and keep a note of everything we are doing so each board does not have to reinvent the wheel each time
- Written clear job descriptions for board positions. This means when you generously volunteer your time to service you know what you need to do in the role you are in.
- Updated all the policies to bring them into the 21st century
- Developed a literature stock control system so we never run out of literature again and we can see what we need to order and when.
- Developed a real time (to the week day) donations and literature income spreadsheet in order to keep on top of the ramifications of the pandemic on the fellowship finances.
- What will your board be working on this year?
- Implement training to future

conference and board members on how to use the new Sharepoint document storage system

- Further development of the website for AA members with documents and resources which will be readily available
- Plans for updating the service manual and having a yearly updating procedure

All these tasks are overseen by the board chair and kept on track where possible.

The board chair role is quite a large one and requires the person to be either retired or be in a position in their life to be able to put in up to 10 hours per week.

Board chairs are chosen from board members on the board. 10 years plus sobriety is suggested.

We welcome any queries around roles on the board. Queries can be sent to boardchair@aa.org.nz



Service Positions

There are currently six positions available.

Chat Function Admin: 2 year term

New service position/ immediate start.

This service role is being created in response to the AA fellowship wanting to add another service channel to reach the newcomer.

Full training will be given.

Website Admin Support: 2 year term

New service position/ immediate start.

This role is to help maintain our website, one of our most important functions.

Full training will be given.

Class A Board Member: 3 year term

A Class A board member is a non-alcoholic and is typically a friend to AA and one who supports the principles of the AA program. Class A board members will ideally have experience in one of the following fields, although they are not limited to these fields: alcoholism treatment in the community, legal and justice fields including police, media, publicity and spiritual.

Class B Conference Experienced Board Member: 3 year term

Class B Board Members are recovering alcoholics who have achieved at least 10 years continuous sobriety and are living so far as possible within the concepts of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. A full Conference term should have been served as a Delegate, Chair or Secretary.

Treasurer Board Member: 3 year term

The role is primarily to ensure the finances of the Board are appropriately managed including the setting of and monitoring of annual budgets.

Class B Board Member Media & Communications: 3 year term

This role provides media and communication support to the General Service Board, media outlets and the fellowship of A.A. Media and Communications experience, including online platforms is preferred.

For role descriptions and nomination forms, please go to the AA website: <https://aa.org.nz/members/service/>.

Book review

Alcoholics Anonymous 75th Anniversary facsimile edition

Reviewed by Randal P.

(Originally Published in 1939, by Works Publishing, Church Street Annex, Post Office Box 657, New York City).

This *sumptuous volume remains as the last word in carrying the message from the first 100 members of early AA who sought recovery from the debilitating disease of alcoholism.

In context I was taken with the message of hope as I leaved through the early chapters, most of which are exactly the same as the current edition.

I was also taken with the wonderful quotes from the book and from the stories.

The cost of \$3.50* per copy seems like a paltry sum today; for such a lifeline and on-going solution to a social problem that had for so long baffled alcoholics, the medical profession, families, employers, and mental health asylums.

And yes, the language is still quaint, speaking of long gone but then accepted American social mores traditions and ideas which would have PC'ers up in arms looking to be offended!

What is very evident are the personal stories and their titles, which in themselves create a real sense of drama and seem almost like newspaper headlines. One wonders if Bill -with his heightened sense of the dramatic may have chosen these!

Our southern friend is as powerful a story as one will find in terms of an agnostic outlook and the psychic change which has occurred for many in AA, (not the least Bill's own story).

I was also taken with the story The European Drinker, the drinking tale of an émigré from the fiercely French region of Alsace, famed for its'

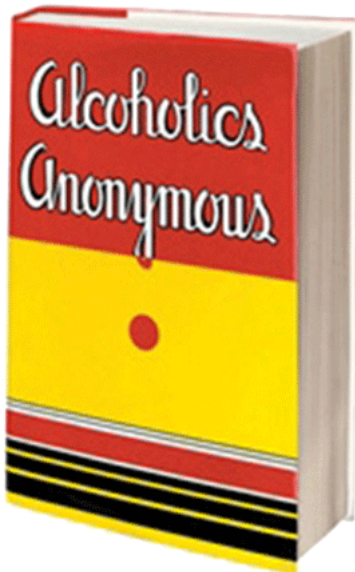
wines (the region was the cause of a series of annexations by Germany post 1914-18 and again in WW2). This story serves to point out that the disease of alcoholism shows no fear or favour on whom it inflicts its misery, to possibly contrast American domestic stories.

The back story regarding the original printing of the Big Book is gripping and compelling, and the whole initiative was almost impecuniously sabotaged. Happily, there was a solution by way of a debenture taken out by an early AA member who underwrote the initial print run.

Once the titles from the first print run were sold, and a second print run undertaken, the debenture was promptly paid and ownership reverted to AA itself, where it remains.

The big book remains one of Time Magazines'100 most influential books of all time and still in print.

- * *Special edition with red hardcover binding, the famous "circus cover" dust jacket and bulky paper (which was why it was initially called the Big Book).*
- ** *\$55.36(US) inflation adjusted current price as at 2020 (not actual). A pound of coffee was 24c in 1939.*



The 75th Commemorative Edition of the Big Book is currently available from the AA website for \$47.00.

For this and other literature, head to <https://aa.org.nz/shop/>

Items of interest

A and D Courts

After many years, the successful trial in Auckland of the Alcohol and Drug courts may soon be extending to other places around New Zealand.

I had the privilege of attending some of these court sessions (as WSD) and meeting a few of the participants at regular AA meetings - where of course, they asked for their court cards' to be signed as proof of attendance'.

There was some controversy in Auckland on how to deal with people turning up and wanting a signature to confirm their attendance at a meeting. Of course, as each of our meetings are autonomous, some groups opted in, while others said no, mistakenly believing it violated our traditions. As I recall, AA provided the courts with a list of all local meetings who were happy to sign attendance cards. Many years ago, in Christchurch, I recall many members required proof of their attendance for courts, probation employers (etc) and if a chair

was uncomfortable doing so (for anonymity reasons) someone else would always do so.

In Auckland, each meeting handles the signatures their own way. Some, the secretary would always sign; others created and used a rubber stamp for someone to initial to indicate the person had attended that meeting on that date.

Given that these courts will eventually be in many parts of New Zealand, maybe it's time for groups, especially perhaps cities, to consider if, when they arrive in your area, your group would opt in, or out, of this.

GSO New York has a good 4-page guideline about this and I believe all groups need to have a copy to consider, along with your understanding of our traditions when you work your way through this decision. (GUIDELINES Cooperating with Court, DWI and Similar Programs)

The guidelines conclusion says "The primary purpose of AA is to carry its message of recovery to the alcoholic who seeks help. Almost every alcoholism treatment tries to help the alcoholic maintain sobriety. Regardless of the road we follow, we all head to the same destination,

recovery of the alcoholic person. Together, we can do what none of us could accomplish alone stop we can serve as a source of personal experience and be an ongoing support system for recovering alcoholics.”

More information – from NZ Courts website:

“The adult Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Court was established in 2012 to pilot an innovative approach to offending which is fuelled by alcohol and other drug addiction.

The court is solutions focused and aims to break the cycle by treating the causes of offending.

It targets offenders who would otherwise be imprisoned, but whose offending is being fuelled by their unresolved high-needs issues of addiction or dependency. They are also assessed as being high-risk in terms of their non-compliance: in other words, past sentences and court orders made have not changed their situation. Consequently, they are on a treadmill of offending, typically being punished but then going on to reoffend.

As an alternative to prison, the court applies evidence-based best practices in a potentially transformative programme of case management, treatment, drug testing, monitoring, and mentoring.

Sentencing is deferred while participants go through the rigorous programme, which includes regular court appearances to check on progress, and may take one to two years to complete.”

Rent-A-Sponsor

- ***Are you tired of being told like it is?***
- ***Do you believe that rigorous honesty is overrated?***
- ***Are you interested in taking the elevator instead of the steps?***
- ***Have you determined that you are terminally unique?***
- ***Would you rather try the easier, softer way?***
- ***Do you find old timers boring?***
- ***Do you think the big book is 164 pages too long?***

Then our ***Rent-A-Sponsor*** Service is perfect for you.

No Reading! No Writing! No Deadlines! No effort whatsoever is required! And we can absolutely guarantee you will not stay sober (or your money back)!

Some of our standard features include:

- Listening to your problems without providing you with

solutions!

- Allowing you to blame others for all your problems!
- Teaching you all the AA lingo so you can impress other newcomers!
- Allowing you to decide if and when you want to work the steps!
- Staying sober is all the amends you need to make!
- Why “walk the walk” when you can just “talk the talk?”
- The only resentment you really need to worry about is the resentment you have against yourself!
- Why save your ass at the cost of losing your face?
- Learn the secret of giving it away without actually “getting it.”
- We also have expert sponsors for those who would like the special “relapse” program.”
Note: the cost of this program is based on the number of relapses you would like to have.

And now, for a limited time, you can purchase our forth step inventory service for a small fee!

We are experts at understanding alcoholics, their uniqueness, and all the things they aren't willing to deal with. Leave your fourth step

inventory in our hands and you will be extremely pleased with the results.

For further information, please call 1-888-SPONSOR.

If you are interested in references, we have clients in rehabs, asylums, jails, and graveyards. In addition, we have some clients living on skid row. We would be more than willing to hook you up with one of them.

Just in case anyone tries to rent a sponsor, this is a joke!

That aint in the Big Book

We hear a lot of stuff said in meetings that can't be reconciled with the program as described in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. What follows are some of the things we often hear, along with what the 1st Edition of our basic text, the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, has to say on the subject.

“We must change playmates, playgrounds, and playthings.”

Page 100-101: “Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do. People have said we must not go where liquor is served; we must not have it in our homes; we must shun friends who drink; we must avoid moving pictures which show drinking scenes; we must not go into bars; our friends must hide their

bottles if we go to their houses; we mustn't think or be reminded about alcohol at all. Our experience shows that this is not necessarily so.

We meet these conditions every day. An alcoholic who cannot meet them, still has an alcoholic mind; there is something the matter with his spiritual status. His only chance for sobriety would be some place like the Greenland Ice Cap, and even there an Eskimo might turn up with a bottle of scotch and ruin everything!"

"I'm a people pleaser. I need to learn to take care of myself"

Page 61, paragraph 2: "Is he not really a self-seeker even when trying to be kind?"

"It's my opinion that... or I don't know anything about the Big Book, but this is the way I do it..."

Page 19, paragraph 1: "We have concluded to publish an anonymous volume setting forth the problem as we see it. We shall bring to the task our combined experience and knowledge. This should suggest a useful program for anyone concerned with a drinking problem."

"Don't drink, no matter what."

Page 34, paragraph 2: "Many of us felt we had plenty of character. There was a tremendous urge to cease forever. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it—this utter inability to leave it

alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish."

Page 31, paragraph 4: "We do not like to pronounce any individual as alcoholic, but you can quickly diagnose yourself. Step over to the nearest barroom and try some controlled drinking. Try to drink and stop abruptly. Try it more than once. It will not take long for you to decide, if you are honest with yourself about it. It may be worth a bad case of jitters if you get a full knowledge of your condition."

"We need to give up planning, it doesn't work."

Page 86, paragraphs 3-4: "On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after

we have tried this for a while.”

“There are no ‘Musts’ in the Big Book”

Page 99, paragraph 1: “...it must be done if any results are to be expected.”

Page 99, paragraph 2: “But we must try to repair the damage immediately lest we pay the penalty by a spree.”

Page 99, paragraph 3: “...it must be on a better basis, since the former did not work.”

Page 83, paragraph 1: “Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead.”

Page 83, paragraph 2: “We must remember that ten or twenty years of drunkenness would make a skeptic out of anyone.”

Page 74, paragraph 1: “Those of us belonging to a religious denomination which requires confession must, and of course, will want to go to the properly appointed authority whose duty it is to receive it.”

Page 74, paragraph 2: “The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others.”

Page 75, paragraph 1: “But we must not use this as a mere excuse to postpone.”

Page 85, paragraph 3: “But we must go further and that means more

action.”

Page 85, paragraph 2: “Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God’s will into all of our activities.”

Page 85, paragraph 2: “These are thoughts which must go with us constantly.”

Page 80, paragraph 1: “If we have obtained permission, have consulted with others, asked God to help and the drastic step is indicated we must not shrink.”

Page 14, paragraph 2: “I must turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all.”

Page 62, paragraph 3: “Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us!”

Page 144, paragraph 3: “The man must decide for himself.”

Page 89, paragraph 2: “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 you must not miss.”

Page 33, paragraph 2: “If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion that someday we will be immune to alcohol.”

Page 79, paragraph 2: “We must not shrink at anything.”

Page 86, paragraph 2: “But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others.”

Page 120, paragraph 2: “...he must redouble his spiritual activities if he expects to survive.”

Page 152, paragraph 2: “I know I must get along without liquor, but how can I?”

Page 95, paragraph 3: “...he must decide for himself whether he wants to go on.”

Page 95, paragraph 3: “If he is to find God, the desire must come from within.”

Page 159, paragraph 3: “Though they knew they must help other alcoholics if they would remain sober, that motive became secondary.”

Page 156, paragraph 3: “Both saw that they must keep spiritually active.”

Page 130, paragraph 2: “...that is where our work must be done.”

Page 82, paragraph 3: “Certainly he must keep sober, for there will be no home if he doesn’t.”

Page 143, paragraph 2: “...he should understand that he must undergo a change of heart”

Page 69, paragraph 4: “Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must

be willing to grow toward it.”

Page 69, paragraph 4: “We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm...”

Page 44, paragraph 3: “...we had to face the fact that we must find a spiritual basis of life - or else.”

Page 78, paragraph 3: “We must lose our fear of creditors no matter how far we have to go, for we are liable to drink if we are afraid to face them.”

Page 93, paragraph 3: “To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action.”

Page 43, paragraph 4: “His defense must come from a Higher Power.”

Page 66, paragraph 4: “We saw that these resentments must be mastered, but how?”

Page 146, paragraph 4: “For he knows he must be honest if he would live at all.”

Page 73, paragraph 5: “We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world.”

But Remember... “When the man is presented with this volume it is best that no one tell him he must abide by its suggestions.” page 144, paragraph 3

Events

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

6TH JUNE 2020

85th AA Founders Day – North Island Central [ONLINE ONLY]

FRIDAY 26TH JUNE 2020 - SUNDAY 28TH JUNE 2020

218th Southern Area Assembly – Marlborough [ONLINE ONLY]

4TH JULY 2020

57th Central Area Assembly AGM [ONLINE ONLY]

Find out more in the members section <https://aa.org.nz/members/whats-new/>

Subscriptions

Mainstay subscriptions fall on a fixed date of 1st April for a 12 month period (six issues) to 31st March the following year. New subscribers will pay a pro rata amount from when they join in the year. In February's issue each year renewal notices will go out with Mainstay for the following year.

# Ordered	Type of Subscription	Start period	Price \$ <i>(inc GST & PP)</i>
	Printed	April/May	36.00
	Printed	June/July	30.00
	Printed	August/September	24.00
	Printed	October/November	18.00
	Printed	December/January	12.00
	Printed	February/March	6.00
	Digital	April/May	24.00
	Digital	June/July	20.00
	Digital	August/September	16.00
	Digital	October/November	12.00
	Digital	December/January	8.00
	Digital	February/March	4.00

In all cases, subscription will not start until payment is received by GSO. Renewal notices for the new subscription year will go out with the February/March issue of Mainstay each year.

Subscriber and renewal details

Name of person placing the order:	
Post Mainstay to: (name and address)	
Email Mainstay to: (name and e-mail)	
How would you like to receive invoices?	<input type="radio"/> E-mailed <input type="radio"/> Posted
Groups name: (if order is for a group)	
Contact phone number and/or email address:	
Payment method:	<input type="radio"/> Bank transfer <input type="radio"/> Cheque payment
Bank Account Details: NZGSO, 06-0501-0236572-00, Ref: Name and Mainstay Post completed order and/or cheques to: Mainstay, 2/30 Downer Street, Hutt Central, Lower Hutt 5010 or complete the registration form at https://aa.org.nz/members/mainstay/mainstay-registration-form/	

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.*

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.

