

If You Are a Professional...

Alcoholics Anonymous
wants to work
with you

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS® is a fellowship of people 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 A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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www.aa.org

A.A. Wants to Work With You

Cooperation with the professional community is an objective of A.A., and has been since our beginnings. We are always seeking to strengthen and expand our communication with you, and we welcome your comments and suggestions. They help us to work more effectively with you in achieving our common purpose: to help the alcoholic who still suffers.

A Resource for the Helping Professional

Professionals who work with alcoholics share a common purpose with Alcoholics Anonymous: to help the alcoholic stop drinking and lead a healthy, productive life.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a nonprofit, self-supporting, entirely independent fellowship — “not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution.” Yet A.A. is in a position to serve as a resource to you through its policy of “cooperation but not affiliation” with the professional community.

We can serve as a source of personal experience with alcoholism as an ongoing support system for recovering alcoholics.

How the Program Works

A.A.’s primary purpose, as stated in our Preamble, is: “to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.”

The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Members share their experiences in recovery from alcoholism on a one-to-one basis, and introduce the newcomer to A.A.’s Twelve Steps of personal recovery and its Twelve Traditions, which sustain the Fellowship itself.

Meetings: At the heart of the program are its meetings, which are conducted autonomously by

A.A. groups in cities and towns throughout the world, even in jails, institutions and on military bases. Anyone may attend open meetings of A.A. These usually consist of talks by one or more speakers who share impressions of their past illness and their present recovery in A.A. Some *open* meetings — to which helping professionals, the media and others are invited — are held for the specific purpose of informing the nonalcoholic (and possibly alcoholic) public about A.A. *Closed* meetings are for alcoholics only.

Alcoholics recovering in A.A. generally attend several meetings each week.

Anonymity. Anonymity helps the Fellowship to govern itself by principles rather than personalities; by attraction rather than promotion. We openly share our program of recovery, but not the names of the individuals in it.

What A.A. Does NOT Do

A.A. does not: Furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover; solicit members; engage in or sponsor research; keep attendance records or case histories; join “councils” or social agencies (although A.A. members, groups and service offices frequently cooperate with them); follow up or try to control its members; make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses; provide detox, rehabilitation or nursing services, hospitalization, drugs, or any medical or psychiatric treatment; offer religious services or host/sponsor retreats; engage in education about alcohol; provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money or any other welfare or social services; provide domestic or vocational counseling; accept any money for its services or any contributions from non-A.A. sources; provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials, social agencies, employers, etc.

Referrals from Judicial, Health Care, Military, or other Professionals

Today numerous A.A. members come to us from judicial, health care, military or other professionals. Some arrive voluntarily; others do not.

A.A. does not discriminate against *any* prospective member. Who made the referral to A.A. is not what interests us — it is the problem drinker who elicits our concern.

Proof of attendance at meetings. Sometimes a referral source asks for proof of attendance at A.A. meetings.

- Groups cooperate in different ways. There is no set procedure. The nature and extent of any group's involvement in this process is entirely up to the individual group.
- Some groups, with the consent of the prospective member, have an A.A. member acknowledge attendance on a slip that has been furnished by the referral source. The referred person is responsible for returning the proof of attendance.

Singleness of Purpose and Problems Other Than Alcohol

Some professionals refer to alcoholism and drug addiction as “substance abuse” or “chemical dependency.” Nonalcoholics are, therefore, sometimes introduced to A.A. and encouraged to attend A.A. meetings. Nonalcoholics may attend *open* A.A. meetings as observers, but only those with a *drinking* problem may attend *closed* meetings.

A.A. Members and Medications

A.A. does not provide medical advice; all medical advice and treatment should come from a qualified health care professional. The suggestions provided in the pamphlet “The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs” may help A.A. members minimize the risk of relapse.

How to Make Referrals to A.A.

Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on the Internet at www.aa.org and in most telephone directories by looking for “Alcoholics Anonymous” or “A.A.” (Some professionals ask the person they are referring to call the local A.A. number while still in the office, thus offering an immediate opportunity to reach out for help).

Or you can contact the General Service Office (GSO) of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. GSO's A.A. website, aa.org, can aid in finding local resources. Additionally, online A.A. meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are in places where there are no meetings nearby.

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THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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.

Recommended A.A. Reading

Many helping professionals have found the following A.A. World Services, Inc. publications helpful in their work with alcoholics. To obtain copies, contact the General Service Office of A.A. or your local A.A. office.

A.A. CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE:

- THIS IS A.A.
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT A.A.
- IS A.A. FOR YOU?
- YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A.
- WOMEN IN A.A.
- LGBTQ ALCOHOLICS IN A.A.
- BLACK IN A.A.
- A.A. FOR THE OLDER ALCOHOLIC — NEVER TOO LATE
- THE A.A. MEMBER — MEDICATIONS AND OTHER DRUGS
- DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DIFFERENT?
- QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON SPONSORSHIP
- IS THERE AN ALCOHOLIC IN YOUR LIFE?
- PROBLEMS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL
- HOW A.A. MEMBERS COOPERATE WITH PROFESSIONALS
- A.A. IN YOUR COMMUNITY
- UNDERSTANDING ANONYMITY
- A.A. AS A RESOURCE FOR THE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL
- MANY PATHS TO SPIRITUALITY
- ACCESS TO A.A.: MEMBERS SHARE ON OVERCOMING BARRIERS
- A.A. FOR ALCOHOLICS WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES
- A MESSAGE TO CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS
- FAITH LEADERS ASK ABOUT A.A.

PERIODICALS:

- ABOUT A.A. (newsletter for helping professionals)
- AA GRAPEVINE (the international monthly journal of A.A.)

For additional information, visit www.aa.org (Information for Professionals) or contact the Cooperation with the Professional Community desk at the General Service Office: cpc@aa.org or 212-870-3400.

