

# Alcoholics Anonymous

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Being Friendly with Our Friends

# What is Alcoholics Anonymous?

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Alcoholics Anonymous is an international fellowship of men and women who have had a drinking problem. Membership is open to anyone who wants to do something about his or her drinking problem.

# Some Facts About A.A.

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- The most successful program of recovery for alcoholism
- More than 300 twelve step programs have sought to emulate the original
- 56,904 groups
- 1.3 million members in the U.S. and Canada.

# AA is...

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- Anonymous
- Voluntary
- Spiritual
- About being honest
- Action oriented

# A.A.'s Spirit of Service

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“Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail...”

# What Does A.A. Do?

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- Share our experience
- Provide a program for recovery – the 12-steps
- Go to meetings

# Twelve 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.

# What Kinds of A.A. Meetings are There?

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- Open meetings
- Closed meetings
- Other Meetings



# Finding Meetings

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- Printed Meeting Lists
- Websites
- Yellow Pages

# What Does A.A. Not Do?

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- Furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover
- Solicit members
- Engage in or sponsor research
- Keep attendance records or case histories
- Join "councils" of social agencies
- Follow up or try to control its members
- Make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses
- Provide drying-out or nursing services, hospitalization, drugs, or any medical or psychiatric treatment
- Offer religious services
- 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.

# Singleness of Purpose

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- The focus of A.A. meetings is recovery from alcoholism.
- People with problems other than alcoholism are eligible for A.A. membership *only* if they also have a drinking a problem.
- A.A. makes its message and Fellowship freely available. What the sufferer does with it is up to him or her.

# Common issues and solutions encountered in our cooperation

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- Mandatory Attendance at Meetings
- Hostile attitudes of some who are required to attend meetings
- Proof of attendance at AA meetings

# Suggestions on requiring people to attend AA meetings

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- When sending offenders to A.A., one judge tells them about the Fellowship and hands each one a small card showing information about meetings, plus suggestions for behavior at A.A. meetings including:
  - being on time
  - staying for the entire meeting
  - not being disruptive, etc.

# Proof of Attendance at Meetings

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- Most meetings will sign court slips – some will not. Its up to each individual group to decide.
- Most people who do sign will just sign their first name or their initials. We are personally anonymous.
- Some areas have tried other mechanisms besides slips, like court envelopes or stamps.

# How AA work is organized

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- Cooperation with the Professional Community committees – inform professionals about AA.
- Public Information committees inform the general public about AA.
- Corrections Committees work to see the message carried behind the walls.
- Treatment committees work to see the message carried into treatment centers.

All work to maintain contact with people who come into contact with alcoholics in order to provide literature and information about AA.

# Suggestions on How to Use A.A.

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- Maintain a contact with AA Committee chairs and members.
- Use a local A.A. intergroup or central office for meeting or contact information.
- Attend Open A.A. Meetings yourself.
- Talk to people in A.A. about their experiences and learn from them about recovery.
- Read A.A. Literature –
  - Big Book.
  - "About A.A." Newsletter for professionals.
  - A.A. Grapevine, a monthly magazine.
  - Other books and pamphlets.



# Partners In Change

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## Bridging The Gap

Connecting alcoholics with AA members when they are making a transition.

## Corrections Correspondence

Connecting alcoholics with AA members when they are incarcerated

# Alcoholics Anonymous

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Questions?