

## Here's what we say about A.A.

### The A.A. 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. 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.

## ADDITIONAL LITERATURE (AA Pamphlets)

Do You Think You Are Different (P-13)  
A Newcomer Asks (P-24)  
Is AA for Me (P-36)  
AA at a Glance (F-1)  
Questions/Answers on Sponsorship  
(P-15)

### WHAT AA DOES NOT DO: Offer Professional counseling

Operate clinics or drying-out  
facilities

Solicit members

Charge dues or fees

Keep membership records

Accept money from non-  
members

Offer religious services

## SO YOU'VE BEEN TOLD TO GO TO AA



**You're not alone  
and...  
You're not the first**

Many of us were sent to our first A.A. meetings by counselors, judges as a consequence of being arrested for drunk driving, family disputes, or other problems involving alcohol. Some of us were sent by our employers.

**If you come to A.A. for a  
similar reason, you probably  
have some questions.**

**We hope this pamphlet  
provides some answers.**

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This pamphlet was prepared, published and approved  
by the Public Information Committee of the Western  
Washington Area 72 of Alcoholics Anonymous(10/97)

## **Don't worry— It's not that bad.**

If a counselor, judge, or employer has sent you to meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, they may believe there is evidence that you have a drinking problem. Please remember—*we had nothing to do with their decision.* If a court wants you to have a card signed, most A.A. meeting secretaries will do so.

Take a look at the meeting directory. You'll see the days, times and places. Meetings marked **(O)** are **Open Meetings** anyone can attend while those marked **(C)** are **Closed Meetings** for alcoholics only.

## **When you go to an A.A. Meeting:**

*You don't have to give your name.* Some meetings ask newcomers to introduce themselves—but you don't have to. At some meetings a sign-in sheet is circulated. This is for the chairperson to use during the meeting—you don't have to sign it. *All participation at AA meetings is voluntary.*

## **You don't have to speak or explain why you're there**

Others will share but no one will think it odd if you remain silent. There are AA members who prefer to sit and listen.

## **You don't have to pay**

There are no dues or fees. During the meeting we'll pass the basket to pay for the room rental, coffee and other necessities. This is one of our Traditions—self support. Unless you consider yourself an AA member, we prefer that you not contribute.

## **We'll respect your anonymity**

Please respect ours. Feel free to use and talk about any of the ideas you hear at an AA meeting, but please don't identify anyone you heard or saw there.

## **It's not a religious meeting**

Most members have a program based upon belief in a Higher Power; but there is no religious affiliation. *What you believe is up to you.* Many meetings open & close with a short prayer. *Participation is optional.*

## **AA meetings may not be what you expect**

*The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.*

At AA meetings you'll find people of all backgrounds, people who have one thing in common: *they're trying to live sober—one day at a time.* ...Meetings usually last about 1-1 1/2 hours. They're easy to locate using meeting directories found at recovery centers, DUI classes and hospitals or by calling the local AA number. They're held in most towns and neighborhoods; mornings, afternoons and evenings.

*Remember, only you can decide whether you're an alcoholic.*

Others may point out indications of a drinking problem such as losing control, DUI arrests, lost jobs, broken marriages/relationships, blackouts, the shakes, etc. But only you can tell if you are actually an alcoholic. *If you decide that you're an alcoholic, we hope you'll stick around.* ...We've found a way out that works for anyone who really wants it.