

**THE
A.A. GROUP
HANDBOOK
FOR GROUPS THAT MEET IN
CORRECTIONAL
FACILITIES**

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Dear A.A. members

This is your A.A. Group Handbook and a small supply of complimentary literature. We hope this information will help your group fulfill its primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Over many years we have gathered shared experience for the benefit of groups like yours. We think you will find three of the enclosed pamphlets particularly helpful to the functioning of an A.A. group. They are:

1. "The A.A. Group" – Shared experience on ways other groups have started and met both challenges and opportunities.
2. "A.A. in Correctional Facilities" – Shares how the A.A. program functions in correctional facilities.
3. "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" – Shares both the spiritual and practical application of our Twelve Traditions.

We have enclosed a listing of central/intergroup offices throughout the U.S. and Canada. These offices provide information on where and when local A.A. meetings are held. Contacting these offices prior to release will be helpful for locating meetings for members who will be leaving the facility in the near future. As you may know, one of the more slippery places in the journey to sobriety is between the door of the facility and the nearest A.A. group or meeting.

If an inmate writes to the General Service Office (G.S.O.) of Alcoholics Anonymous within three to six months of their release date, we could try to arrange for somebody to write to them just prior to their release. This would give the inmate a chance to have an A.A. contact in the home community. Hopefully, this would help in the transition from A.A. on the "inside" to "outside" A.A. When an inmate writes to us, please ask them to include the city/state they will be living in and their approximate release date.

At the G.S.O. we also coordinate a Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS) for inmates who will be incarcerated for longer than six months. Guidelines describing this service are included in this Handbook, and if any inside A.A. member is interested in corresponding with an outside A.A. member, please have them write to G.S.O. Men will be put in touch with men and women with women, just as suggested for A.A. sponsorship.

If your group is not in touch with the local A.A. Corrections Committee, please let us know and we will make contact for you. These committees often help to provide A.A. literature and outside contacts for groups on the inside.

We hope that all of your group members will become familiar with the contents of the Handbook and, as we have heard many A.A.s say, "The more informed the members—the more effective the group." We wish all of you many happy days of A.A. sharing and hope that you keep in touch with us from time to time.

Good luck and warm wishes from all the staff at your General Service Office.

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 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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THE AA PREAMBLE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE PREAMBLE was introduced in the June 1947 issue of the AA Grapevine magazine. It was written by the then-editor, who borrowed much of the phrasing from the Foreword to the original edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

In those early years, the Grapevine had just begun to circulate among nonalcoholics, and the Preamble was intended primarily to describe for them what AA is and is not. It is still often used for public information purposes. As time passed, it began appearing in all Conference-approved publications, and many AA groups now use it to open meetings.

The original version differed in two ways from the familiar form we all know: 1) It stated that "the only requirement for membership is an *honest* desire to stop drinking," and 2) it contained only the very brief statement "AA has no dues or fees."

People often ask why the word "honest" was deleted. At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate asked about the words "honest desire to stop drinking," suggesting that since "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, it might be deleted from the Preamble. In discussion, most Conference members felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. Thus, as part of the evolution of AA, the phrase had been dropped from common usage. The midsummer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board of Trustees ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking."

At the same time, the phrase "AA has no dues or fees" was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions." The current version of the Preamble appears on page one of every issue of the Grapevine.

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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, 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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HOW IT WORKS

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with alcohol—cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find Him now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon.

Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

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*.

(OVER)

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.

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

Reprinted from the book "Alcoholics Anonymous"®
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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.
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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.

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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

(SHORT FORM)

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.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADING BEGINNERS MEETINGS

- **What Kinds of Meetings Work Best**
- **How Leaders Can Prepare Themselves**
- **Suggested Topics for Meetings**

This booklet is for all A.A.s. Although it is written mainly to help the group holding beginners meetings, or the member leading them, any other A.A. will find it worthwhile reading.

By receiving and giving A.A. help, every one of us becomes a link in a chain around the world. All of us cling to the chain to save our lives, and yet each of us is part of it—depending on all the others to help keep the chain unbroken.

So this booklet explores ways to strengthen the links—ways through which we can stay sober by helping other alcoholics stay away from one drink, one day at a time. It is a collection, from A.A. groups everywhere, of suggestions for helping A.A. newcomers gain sobriety and grow in the program.



WHAT KINDS OF BEGINNERS MEETINGS WORK BEST?

Many kinds have worked well. They range from small, unplanned, informal discussions, with newcomers doing most of the talking and a different leader each time, to large sessions, prearranged in a series, with one continuing leader giving prepared talks on specific A.A. subjects.

A combination of these two types seems to work best. Groups have found that newcomers' chances of recovery are higher if they can actively take part in A.A. discussions as soon as possible—and that they also need someone with A.A. experience to tell them the essential facts about alcoholism and our program of recovery.

Therefore, many beginners meetings include both (1) a brief talk by the leader, for not more than twenty or thirty minutes in an hour meeting, and (2) discussion by all present.

WHAT IS A GOOD GENERAL OUTLINE FOR THE LEADER?

Many experienced leaders of beginners meetings say that their opening remarks generally cover these points:

1. Welcome to newcomers. (Newcomers are essential to A.A.'s health and growth. In the first few weeks, they will discover that their fresh experiences make them vital links in reaching other suffering alcoholics.)
2. Assurance that newcomers' anonymity will be respected.
3. Explanation that everything the leader or any other member says is only the individual's opinion, that no one can speak on behalf of the entire worldwide Fellowship (or, indeed, of any group).
4. Brief statement of the Fellowship's size and scope.
5. Brief sharing of the leader's own experience, including in condensed form the usual elements of an A.A. talk: identification as an alcoholic (not necessarily *events* while drinking, but *feelings*); how the leader came to A.A.; recovery in the program; knowledge gained from A.A.
6. Comments on any particular topic that, in the leader's opinion, newcomers need or want to know about. (There are suggestions on the following pages.)
7. Information about other local meetings.
8. Recommendation of the A.A. message in print—so that newcomers may take it with them after the meeting in the form of A.A. books, pamphlets, or the Grapevine.

CAN A LEADER PREPARE FOR BEGINNERS MEETINGS?

Most say they can if they keep their minds open to suggestions from the experience of others. This guide both summarizes such experience and points out Conference-approved literature in which generally accepted A.A. thinking on many important topics is given in greater detail. For instance, the booklet *Living Sober*—specifically designed for newcomers—provides possible answers to questions often asked at beginners meetings.

When a leader is “willing to go to any length” to help newcomers, preparation for a meeting can be an exciting and rewarding venture, not a chore.

As one leader wrote, “After all, I am responsible.” Experience of more than seventy years throughout the Fellowship does indeed suggest strongly that anyone who sets out to lead a newcomers meeting should take this privilege as a serious responsibility—and work at it.

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR BEGINNERS MEETINGS

1—*How to Stay Away From One Drink One Day at a Time*

(In any series of beginners meetings there are usually new faces at each session. Therefore, leaders have found that this topic should always be included in every meeting.)

When we first came to A.A., many of us did not realize that the *first* drink triggered the compulsion to drink more and more; that it deluded us into thinking we could drink another safely, then another and another.

The danger seems obvious now, but many of today’s newcomers are just as baffled as we once were. So the leader usually explains the significance of the first drink—and how to avoid just that one, for at least one day or one hour.

Almost every A.A. has a favorite means of doing this, and other members attending a meeting can make suggestions for additions to the following:

1. The twenty-four hour (or one-minute, if necessary) plan.
2. The *halt* reminder—never getting too *Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired*.
3. Sticking close to your sponsor and discussing personal problems with him or her.
4. *Postponing* the drink.
5. Going to lots of A.A. meetings.
6. Keeping pockets stuffed with A.A. reading matter.

7. Prayer—in whatever form the new member prefers it.
8. Changing routines—especially at drinking hours—to break up the old habit patterns.
9. Spending time with other members individually—either in person or on the telephone (and especially during old drinking hours).
10. Spending time in meeting rooms or central offices where A.A.s gather outside of regular meeting hours.
11. Starting work on the Twelve Steps, to fight such threats to sobriety as resentments, self-pity, and the tendency to dwell on the past or the future.

2—*Alcoholism, the Disease*

Information on successful Twelfth Step work can be found throughout the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Also check *A.A. Comes of Age*.

Alcoholics usually have to face the medical facts of the disease, as well as the present unmanageability of their own lives, before they can accept help. This seems to be true even for newcomers who are forced by pressure from others to come to A.A. for the first time.

The medical viewpoint on alcoholism that helped to bring about the birth of A.A. is outlined in the chapter "The Doctor's Opinion" in *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It is explained in further detail in the first three chapters of the Big Book, and in the A.A. pamphlets "Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W." and "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional."

Many good descriptions of the disease are used by A.A. members, such as: "threefold illness," "progressive disease," "compulsion plus obsession," etc. (See the pamphlet "44 Questions," included in this packet.)

Many newcomers have also been helped by discussion of various definitions of alcoholism, of the symptoms of the disease, of the uselessness of misdirected willpower in combating alcoholism, of the futility in insisting on an intellectual understanding of the condition *before* becoming willing to *practice* the A.A. program.

#3—How It Works:
The Twelve Steps Suggested as a Program of Recovery

Many of us wonder when we first approach A.A. just *how it works*.

That's the title of Chapter V in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, of course. It is the heart of the A.A. message and is enclosed in this packet.

Because the newcomer may have been told that "there are no musts in A.A.," it seems wise to explain that these *suggested* Steps are a summary of actual past experience in recovery.

The men and women responsible for the Steps realized that they could never reach in person many alcoholics who wanted their help. So they knew they had to be especially careful to use the words that would describe most honestly and completely the road they had taken.

Leaders of beginners meetings generally agree that newcomers are rarely helped by ponderous sermonizing about the Twelve Steps, or by complicated interpretations. The Steps speak plainly for themselves, and all newcomers are, of course, free to interpret and use them as they individually choose.

It is the leader's job to be sure that their exact wording is made available to the newcomer. While newcomers may not be in the mood for serious reading, the sooner they can read *Alcoholics Anonymous* the better. Some groups give it away, others sell it, many keep a "lending library" of A.A. books; some award the Big Book or *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* as a "door prize."

4—The Twelve Traditions:
What We Learn from A.A. Mistakes

The Traditions explain much of the seemingly contradictory behavior that confuses newcomers when they first encounter a fellowship that functions with so little obvious organization: "anonymity"—and yet the occasional use of full names at meetings; "no dues or fees"—and then the basket is passed.

A discussion of the origin of the Traditions, in relation to our earlier mistakes, can answer many questions and allay many anxieties for newcomers.

By relating their own experiences in using the Traditions, leaders can help newcomers understand the importance of principles before personalities, of anonymity at the public, print or broadcast level, of the group conscience, self-support, and A.A.'s nonaffiliation with other organizations.

Knowing what A.A. does *not* do is as important for many of us as knowing what it *does* do, so that we will not expect more than A.A. can deliver. A list of services A.A. does not provide is given in the pamphlet "A.A. in Your Community," included in this packet.

If leaders want to feel secure in their own understanding of the Traditions, it is recommended that they study carefully *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* and *A.A. Comes of Age*, plus the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," also enclosed.

5—A.A. in Print—Service to Others

Most A.A.s agree that newcomers are entitled to know about *all* the A.A. help available to them.

This includes A.A. literature published by A.A. World Services, Inc., which offers a large range of various kinds of A.A. help. It carefully reflects the broadest possible consensus of the entire movement, worldwide—not just some individual's personal interpretation or some unique local view.

Pointing out what these publications are, and what they contain, may be one of the finest services we can give to newcomers, because we are thereby encouraging them to dig out the answers for themselves.

Another gift of knowledge we can pass on to newcomers is information about our Third Legacy of Service, helping them to understand their own role as new links in our worldwide chain of love and service.

It is easy to explain just how A.A. is geared to serve alcoholics after reading about it in the enclosed pamphlet "The A.A. Group." In addition, information about the general service structure appears in brief form in the pamphlet "Inside A.A.," also enclosed.

6—Other Factors in A.A. Recovery

In addition to the five suggestions above, many groups report that their beginners meetings include discussions of these topics:

- a) The original A.A. experience, as described in *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *A.A. Comes of Age*.
- b) The desire to be sober for oneself.
- c) Release from the compulsion and removal of the obsession.
- d) Who can be a member of A.A. and how to join. Many newcomers are greatly relieved at the absence of any official ritual, "signing up," or other procedure for becoming an A.A. member. Anyone may attend *open* A.A. meetings. Membership in A.A. is open to anyone with a drinking problem. Dually-addicted people are also eligible for A.A. membership, *if they have a drinking problem*.

- e) Acceptance of facts about ourselves; self-honesty as the basis of the program.
- f) The Serenity Prayer.
- g) The A.A. Slogans.
- h) Sponsorship; how to get a sponsor, how to change sponsors, if necessary. (See the enclosed pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship.")
- i) The family (see Chapters 8 and 9, "To Wives" and "The Family Afterward," in *Alcoholics Anonymous*) and ways in which nonalcoholic relatives can get guidance in understanding alcoholism and thus helping the alcoholic (the Al-Anon Family Groups and Alateen).
- j) The A.A. language. Most leaders of beginners meetings agree that it is very important to explain any specialized A.A. jargon to newcomers. Indeed, it is essential to make all discussions at these meetings as simple and understandable as we can. Many newcomers arrive with no prior knowledge of A.A., and (as most of us recall from our own histories) few newcomers are mentally in the best shape for rapidly absorbing complex information or ideas.
- k) Spiritual awakening. Ever since Ebby T. first successfully twelfth-stepped Bill W., A.A.s have been encouraged to arrive at their *own* conception of A.A. recovery tools. For a discussion of the role of a spiritual awakening in recovery, see in *Alcoholics Anonymous* the chapters "We Agnostics," "Working with Others," "A Vision for You," and "Spiritual Experience." Also refer to Step Twelve in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* and in *A.A. Comes of Age*; plus the pamphlets "44 Questions" and "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship."
- l) Are sedatives dangerous for alcoholics? (Refer to "The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs.")

SUGGESTIONS ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR BEGINNERS MEETINGS

Rotation of jobs in the group is considered highly valuable in A.A. (see "The A.A. Group" pamphlet). After one member has led a series of beginners meetings (anywhere from four to twelve—but six seems to be the favorite number), another leader rotates into the job for the next series. Many groups like to alternate between men and women as leaders, with a man leading one series, a woman the next. Other groups prefer that each beginners meeting be led by a different member.

In those areas where A.A.s are most enthusiastic about the results of beginners meetings, there seems to be general agreement on these ideas:

- 1) The meeting should be separate and apart from the regular open or closed meeting. In some localities, it is scheduled for one hour preceding a regular meeting. In others, the beginners meeting is held at the regular meeting hour, either in a different room (where space permits) or on a different evening.

- 2) An intimate, informal atmosphere seems friendliest and encourages participation by the newcomer. With that aim in mind, the favorite arrangement has members seated around a large table.
- 3) Neither the leader nor any of the "older in sobriety" members present should dominate the meeting. It is up to the leader to see that this does not turn into an ordinary discussion, with the more experienced talkers crowding the newcomer out.
- 4) The newcomer should feel welcome to participate, but never made to feel "on the spot" or on the defensive by being asked questions.
- 5) Any A.A. member should feel free to attend the meeting and meet and help newcomers there.
- 6) Presenting the newcomer with a packet of basic recovery pamphlets and a current meeting list is always helpful.

**A.A. WORLD SERVICES, INC.
BOX 459 • GRAND CENTRAL STATION
NEW YORK, NY 10163**

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SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION MEETINGS

GENERAL IDEAS

1. **The Twelve Steps**

Some groups discuss one Step a week. If there is a newcomer attending for the first time, the group may change the topic to focus on the first three Steps.

2. **The Twelve Traditions**

Following the conclusion of the Step meetings, some groups will discuss the Traditions so that, every thirteenth meeting the group focuses on a Tradition.

3. **The Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous***

Some groups discuss one chapter from the Big Book each week. Other groups read from the Big Book weekly and discuss each chapter as they go along.

4. Readings from *As Bill Sees It* can inspire sharing on discussion topics.

5. *Living Sober* also has many topics used by groups.

6. Some A.A. slogans can be used as topics—such as “**Live and Let Live,**” “**Easy Does It,**” “**First Things First,**” and “**H.A.L.T.**” (Don’t get too Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired).

SOME SPECIFIC TOPICS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Acceptance | 7. Fear |
| 2. Attitude of gratitude | 8. Forgiveness |
| 3. Belief in a Higher Power | 9. Freedom through sobriety |
| 4. Complacency | 10. Group inventory |
| 5. Contempt prior to investigation | 11. Hope |
| 6. Dependence | 12. Humility |

- | | |
|---|--|
| 13. Identification | 29. Resentments |
| 14. Inadequacy | 30. Responsibility pledge |
| 15. Inventory | 31. Rigorous honesty |
| 16. Letting go of anger | 32. Serenity |
| 17. Let's be friendly with our friends | 33. Service |
| 18. Living one day at a time | 34. Sponsorship |
| 19. Making amends | 35. Staying away from the first drink |
| 20. Meditation | 36. Surrender |
| 21. Open-mindedness | 37. Three Legacies — Recovery, Unity and Service |
| 22. Participation and action | 38. Twelfth Stepping |
| 23. Patience and tolerance | 39. Twelve Concepts |
| 24. Personal spiritual experience and spiritual awakening | 40. Understanding Anonymity |
| 25. Plan the action — not the result | 41. Ways of carrying the A.A. message |
| 26. Practice these principles in all our affairs | 42. What is sobriety |
| 27. Principles before personalities | 43. Willingness |
| 28. Projection — living in the wreckage of the future | 44. Working with others |

Other topics may be found in the A.A. Grapevine monthly section on "Discussion Topics."

General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

Web Site: www.aa.org

Reviewed 7/20/06

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TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

from the A.A. Grapevine

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

Practice These Principles....

Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.

1. Am I in my group a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?
2. Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into argument?
3. Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
4. Do I make competitive AA remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting AA in one place with AA in another?
5. Do I put down some AA activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect of AA?
6. Am I informed about AA as a whole? Do I support, in every way I can, AA as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?
7. Am I as considerate of AA members as I want them to be of me?
8. Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?
9. Do I go to enough AA meetings or read enough AA literature to really keep in touch?
10. Do I share with AA all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of fellowship?

Tradition Two: 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.

1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibility?
3. Do I look for credit in my AA jobs? Praise for my AA ideas?
4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
5. Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

Tradition Three: The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.

1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
5. Am I overimpressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to AA before? What his other problems are?

Tradition Four: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

1. Do I insist that there are only a few *right* ways of doing things in AA?
2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of Loners in Alaska? Of Internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?

3. Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths—his lengths, not mine—to stay sober?
6. Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, "I'm not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn't apply to me"?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the *limitations* of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
6. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

Tradition Six: An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

1. Should my fellow group members and I go out and raise money to endow several AA beds in our local hospital?
2. Is it good for a group to lease a small building?
3. Are all the officers and members of our local club for AAs familiar with "Guidelines on Clubs" (which is available free from GSO)?
4. Should the secretary of our group serve on the mayor's advisory committee on alcoholism?
5. Some alcoholics will stay around AA only if we have a TV and card room. If this is what is required to carry the message to them, should we have these facilities?

Tradition Seven: Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

1. Honestly now, do I do all I can to help AA (my group, my central office, my GSO) remain self-supporting? Could I put a little more into the basket on behalf of the new guy who can't afford it yet? How generous was I when tanked in a barroom?
2. Should the Grapevine sell advertising space to book publishers and drug companies, so it could make a big profit and become a bigger magazine, in full color, at a cheaper price per copy?
3. If GSO runs short of funds some year, wouldn't it be okay to let the government subsidize AA groups in hospitals and prisons?
4. Is it more important to get a big AA collection from a few people, or a smaller collection in which more members participate?
5. Is a group treasurer's report unimportant AA business? How does the treasurer feel about it?
6. How important in my recovery is the feeling of self-respect, rather than the feeling of being always under obligation for charity received?

Tradition Eight: Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

1. Is my own behavior accurately described by the Traditions? If not, what needs changing?
2. When I chafe about any particular Tradition, do I realize how it affects others?
3. Do I sometimes try to get *some* reward—even if not money—for my personal AA efforts?
4. Do I try to sound in AA like an expert on alcoholism? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On AA itself? On psychology? On spiritual matters? Or, heaven help me, even on *humility*?
5. Do I make an effort to understand what AA employees do? What workers in other alcoholism agencies do? Can I distinguish clearly among them?
6. In my own AA life, have I any experiences which illustrate the wisdom of this Tradition?
7. Have I paid enough attention to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*? To the pamphlet *AA Tradition—How It Developed*?

Tradition Nine: AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?

2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the AA program—even if no one makes me do so—with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
6. Why doesn't every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

Tradition Ten: Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

1. Do I ever give the impression that there really *is* an “AA opinion” on Antabuse? Tranquilizers? Doctors? Psychiatrists? Churches? Hospitals? Jails? Alcohol? The federal or state government? Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins? Al-Anon? Alateen?
2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those without giving the impression I am stating the “AA opinion”?
3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
4. Have I had a similar experience in my own AA life?
5. What would AA be without this Tradition? Where would I be?
6. Do I breach this or any of its supporting Traditions in subtle, perhaps unconscious, ways?
7. How can I manifest the spirit of this Tradition in my personal life outside AA? Inside AA?

Tradition Eleven: 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.

1. Do I sometimes promote AA so fanatically that I make it seem *unattractive*?
2. Am I always careful to keep the confidences reposed in me as an AA member?
3. Am I careful about throwing AA names around—even within the Fellowship?
4. Am I ashamed of being a recovered, or recovering, alcoholic?
5. What would AA be like if we were not guided by the ideas in Tradition Eleven? Where would I be?

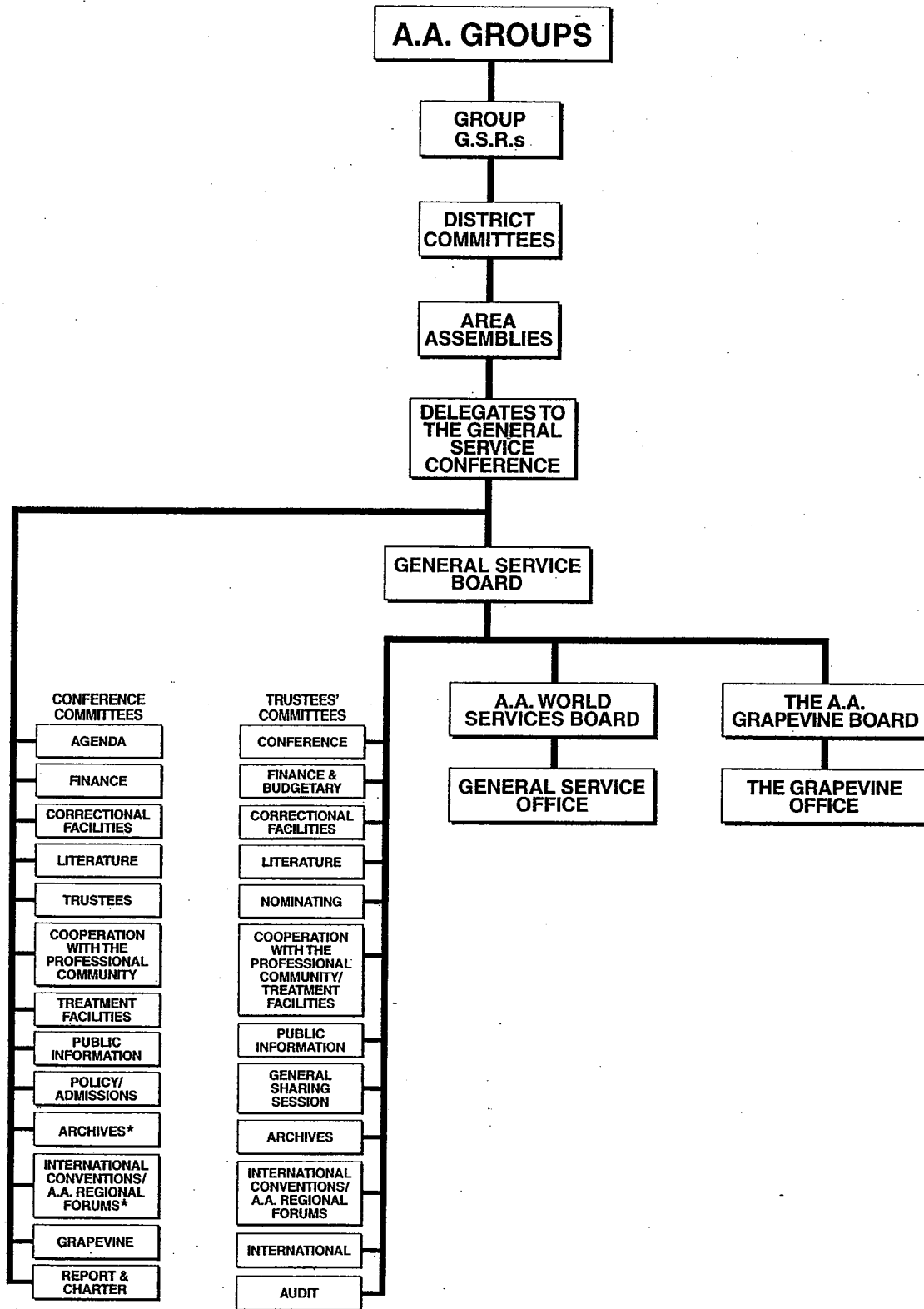
6. Is my AA sobriety attractive enough that a sick drunk would want such a quality for himself?

Tradition Twelve: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1. Why is it good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to *me* if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to *my* standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is *my* part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition—or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs' behavior—especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made *me* so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of *me* among more than a million AAs?

THE AA GRAPEVINE INC., PO BOX 1980, GRAND CENTRAL STATION, NEW YORK, NY 10163-1980

The General Service Conference Structure (U.S. and Canada)



*Secondary committee.

CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE

“Conference-approved” — What It Means to You

The term “Conference-approved” describes written or audiovisual material approved by the Conference for publication by G.S.O. This process assures that everything in such literature is in accord with A.A. principles. Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous or with information about the A.A. Fellowship.

The term has no relation to material not published by G.S.O. It does not imply Conference disapproval of other material about A.A. A great deal of literature helpful to alcoholics is published by others, and A.A. does not try to tell any individual member what he or she may or may not read.

Conference approval assures us that a piece of literature represents solid A.A. experience. Any Conference-approved booklet or pamphlet goes through a lengthy and painstaking process, during which a variety of A.A.s from all over the United States and Canada read and express opinions at every stage of production.

How To Tell What Is and What Is Not Conference-approved

Look for the statement on books, pamphlets and films:

“This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature”

Not All “A.A. Literature” Is Conference-Approved

Central offices and intergroups do write and distribute pamphlets or booklets that are not Conference-approved. If such pieces meet the needs of the local membership, they may be legitimately classified as “A.A. literature.” There is no conflict between A.A. World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S. — publishers of Conference-approved literature), and central offices or intergroups — rather they complement each other. The Conference does not disapprove of such material.

G.S.O. does develop some literature that does not have to be approved by the Conference, such as service material, Guidelines and bulletins.

Available at Most A.A. Groups

Most local A.A. groups purchase and display a representative sampling of Conference-approved pamphlets, and usually carry a supply of hardcover books. Conference-approved literature may be available at central offices and intergroups, or it may be

ordered directly from G.S.O. Groups normally offer pamphlets free of charge, and the books at cost.

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Conference-approved literature is copyrighted with the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., U.S.A. To insure the continued integrity of A.A. literature, and to make sure the A.A. recovery program will not be distorted or diluted, permission to reprint must be obtained from A.A.W.S. in writing.

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Information on Alcoholics Anonymous

For Anyone New Coming to A.A. For Anyone Referring People to A.A.

This information is both for people who may have a drinking problem and for those in contact with people who have, or are suspected of having, a problem. Most of the information is available in more detail in literature published by A.A. World Services, Inc. This sheet tells what to expect from Alcoholics Anonymous. It describes what A.A. is, what A.A. does, and what A.A. does *not* do.

What Is A.A.?

Alcoholics Anonymous is an international fellowship of men and women who have had a drinking problem. It is nonprofessional, self-supporting, multiracial, apolitical, and available almost everywhere. There are no age or education requirements. Membership is open to anyone who wants to do something about his or her drinking problem.

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. Anyone may attend *open* A.A. meetings, but only those with a *drinking* problem may attend *closed* meetings.

A renowned psychiatrist, who served as a nonalcoholic trustee of the A.A. General Service Board, made the following statement: "Singleness of purpose is essential to the effective treatment of alcoholism. The reason for such exaggerated focus is to overcome denial. The denial associated with alcoholism is cunning, baffling, and powerful and affects the patient, helper, and the community. Unless alcoholism is kept relentlessly in the foreground, other issues will usurp everybody's attention."

What Does A.A. Do?

1. A.A. members share their experience with anyone seeking help with a drinking problem; they give person-to-person service or "sponsorship" to the alcoholic coming to A.A. from any source.
2. The A.A. program, set forth in our Twelve Steps, offers the alcoholic a way to develop a satisfying life without alcohol.
3. This program is discussed at A.A. group meetings.
 - a. Open *speaker* meetings — open to alcoholics and nonalcoholics. (Attendance at an open A.A. meeting is the best way to learn what A.A. is, what it does, and what it does not do.) At speaker meetings, A.A. members "tell their stories." They describe their experiences with alcohol, how they came to A.A., and how their lives have changed as a result of Alcoholics Anonymous.
 - b. Open *discussion* meetings — one member speaks briefly about his or her drinking experience, and then leads a discussion on A.A. recovery or any drinking-related problem anyone brings up. (*Closed meetings are for A.A.s or anyone who may have a drinking problem.*)
 - c. Closed discussion meetings — conducted just as open discussions are, but for alcoholics or prospective A.A.s only.
 - d. Step meetings (usually closed) — discussion of one of the Twelve Steps.
 - e. A.A. members also take meetings into correctional and treatment facilities.
 - f. A.A. members may be asked to conduct the informational meetings about A.A. as a part of A.S.A.P. (Alcohol Safety Action Project) and D.W.I. (Driving While Intoxicated) programs. These meetings *about A.A.* are *not* regular A.A. group meetings.

What A.A. Does Not Do

A.A. does not:

1. Furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover
2. Solicit members
3. Engage in or sponsor research
4. Keep attendance records or case histories
5. Join "councils" of social agencies
6. Follow up or try to control its members
7. Make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses
8. Provide drying-out or nursing services, hospitalization, drugs, or any medical or psychiatric treatment
9. Offer religious services
10. Engage in education about alcohol

11. Provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money, or any other welfare or social services
12. Provide domestic or vocational counseling
13. Accept any money for its services, or any contributions from non-A.A. sources
14. Provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials, social agencies, employers, etc.

Members From Court Programs and Treatment Facilities

In recent years, A.A. groups have welcomed many new members from court programs and treatment facilities. Some have come to A.A. voluntarily; others, under a degree of pressure. In our pamphlet "How A.A. Members Cooperate," the following appears:

We cannot discriminate against any prospective A.A. member, even if he or she comes to us under pressure from a court, an employer, or any other agency.

Although the strength of our program lies in the voluntary nature of membership in A.A., many of us first attended meetings because we were forced to, either by someone else or by inner discomfort. But continual exposure to A.A. educated us to the true nature of the illness.... Who made the referral to A.A. is not what A.A. is interested in. It is the problem drinker who is our concern.... We cannot predict who will recover, nor have we the authority to decide how recovery should be sought by any other alcoholic.

Proof of Attendance at Meetings

Sometimes, courts ask for proof of attendance at A.A. meetings.

Some groups, with the consent of the prospective member, have the A.A. group secretary sign or initial a slip that has been furnished by the court together with a self-addressed court envelope. The referred person supplies identification and mails the slip back to the court as proof of attendance.

Other 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.

This proof of attendance at meetings is *not* part of A.A.'s procedure. Each group is autonomous and has the right to choose whether or not to sign court slips. In some areas the attendees report on themselves, at the request of the referring agency, and thus alleviate breaking A.A. members' anonymity.

Literature

A.A. Conference-approved literature is available in French and Spanish. For additional copies of this paper, or for a literature catalog please write or call the General Service Office.

The A.A. Grapevine, a monthly international journal — also known as "our meeting in print" — features many interesting stories about recovery from alcoholism written primarily by members of A.A. It is a useful introduction and ongoing link to A.A.'s diverse fellowship and wealth of recovery experience. The Spanish-language magazine La Viña, is published bimonthly.

For Grapevine information or to order a subscription to either the AA Grapevine or La Viña: (212) 870-3404; fax (212) 870-3301; Web site: www.aagrapevine.org.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of A.A. is to carry its message of recovery to the alcoholic seeking help. Almost every alcoholism treatment tries to help the alcoholic maintain sobriety. Regardless of the road we follow, we all head for the same destination, recovery of the alcoholic person. Together, we can do what none of us could accomplish alone. We can serve as a source of personal experience and be an ongoing support system for recovering alcoholics.

A.A. World Services, Inc., Box 459, Grand Central Station,
New York, NY 10163. Tel. (212) 870-3400. www.aa.org

FELLOWSHIPS SIMILAR TO A.A.

The "anonymous" organizations are listed below for information purposes only. In keeping with its Sixth Tradition, Alcoholics Anonymous does not "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."

Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA)
ACA WSO
P.O. Box 3216
Torrance, CA 90510
Tel: (310) 534-1815 (messages only)
Email: info@adultchildren.org
Web: www.adultchildren.org

Al-Anon/Alateen Family Group Headquarters
(for families and friends of alcoholics)
1600 Corporate Landing Pkwy.
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
Tel: (757) 563-1600; Fax: (757) 563-1655
Tel: (888) 425-2666 (general meeting info.)
Email: wso@al-anon.org
Web: www.al-anon.alateen.org

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada)
Capital Corporate Centre
9 Antares Drive Suite 245
Ottawa, ON K2E 7V5
Tel: (613) 723-8484
Fax: (613) 723-0151

A.R.T.S. Anonymous
(Artists Recovering through the Twelve Steps)
P.O. Box 230175
New York, NY 10023
Tel: (212) 873-7075
Web: www.artsanonymous.org

Clutterers Anonymous
P.O. Box 91413
Los Angeles, CA 90009-1413
Email: clawso@hotmail.com
Web: www.clutterersanonymous.net

Cocaine Anonymous
3740 Overland Ave, Suite C
Los Angeles, CA 90034-6337
Tel: (310) 559-5833; Fax: (310) 559-2554
Email: cawso@ca.org
Web: www.ca.org

CoDA (Co-Dependents Anonymous)
P.O. Box 33577
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577
Tel: (602) 277-7991
Email: outreach@codas.org
Web: www.codependents.org

C.M.A. (Crystal Meth Anonymous)
8205 Santa Monica Blvd PMB 1-114
West Hollywood, CA 90046-5977
Tel: (213) 488-4455
Web: www.crystallmeth.org

Debtors Anonymous
P.O. Box 920888
Needham, MA 02492-0009
Tel: (781) 453-2743; Fax: (781) 453-2745
Email: new@debtorsanonymous.org
Web: www.debtorsanonymous.org

Emotions Anonymous
P.O. Box 4245
St. Paul, MN 55104-0245
Tel: (651) 647-9712; Fax: (651) 647-1593
Email: info@emotionsanonymous.org
Web: www.emotionsanonymous.org

Gamblers Anonymous
P.O. Box 17173
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Tel: (213) 386-8789; Fax: (213) 386-0030
Email: ismain@gamblersanonymous.org
Web: www.gamblersanonymous.org

N.A. (Narcotics Anonymous)
NAWS
P.O. Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409-9999
Tel: (818) 773-9999; Fax: (818) 700-0700
Email: info@na.org
Web: www.na.org/contact.htm

Obsessive Compulsive Anonymous
P.O. Box 215
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
Tel: (516) 739-0662
Web: www.hometown.aol.com/west24th

P.A.A. (Pill Addicts Anonymous)
P.O. Box 13728
Reading, PA 19612

HIV Anonymous
129 W. Canada
San Clement, CA 92672
Tel: (949) 264-4170
Email: info@hivanonymous.com
Web: www.hivanonymous.com

S.A.A. (Sex Addicts Anonymous)
ISO of SAA
P.O. Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270
Tel: (800) 477-8191
Email: info@saa-recovery.org
Web: www.saa-recovery.org

I.S.A. (Incest Survivors Anonymous)
P.O. Box 17245
Long Beach, CA 90807-7245
Tel: (562) 428-5599
Email: bb239@lafn.org

Nicotine Anonymous
NAWS
419 Main Street PMB #370
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
Tel: (866) 536-4539; Fax: (714) 969-4493
Tel: (415) 750-0328
Email: info@nicotine-anonymous.org
Web: www.nicotine-anonymous.org

O.A. (Overeaters Anonymous)
World Service Office
PO Box 44020
6075 Zenith Ct. NE
Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020
Tel: (505) 891-2664; Fax: (505) 891-4320
Email: info@oa.org
Web: www.overeatersanonymous.org

Positive Anonymous (*HIV Positive*)
453 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12204
Tel: (518) 436-3465

Rape Survivors Anonymous
28 E. Jackson Blvd. Suite S-10
Chicago, IL 60604
Tel: (773) 772-7960

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous
Fellowship-Wide Services
1550 NE Loop 410, Ste 118
San Antonio, TX 78209
Tel: (210) 828-7900
Fax: (210) 828-7922
Email: info@slaafws.org
Web: www.slaafws.org

Sexaholics Anonymous
P.O. Box 3565
Brentwood, TN 37024
Tel: (615) 370-6062
Fax: (615) 370-0882
Email: saico@sa.org
Web: www.sa.org

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous
P.O. Box 1585
Old Chelsea Station
New York, N.Y. 10011
Tel: (800) 977-4325
Web: www.sca-recovery.org

S.I.A. (Survivors of Incest Anonymous)
World Service Office
P.O. Box 190
Benson, MD 21018
Tel: (410) 893-3322
Email: feedback@aiawso.org
Web: www.siaawso.org

Workaholics Anonymous
World Services Organization
P.O. Box 289
Menlo Park, CA 94026-0289
Tel: (510) 273-9253
Email: wso@workaholics-anonymous.org
Web: www.workaholics-anonymous.org

For additional addresses of "anonymous" groups and other self-help organizations contact:

New Jersey Self-Help Clearinghouse
(for NJ and national information)
100 E. Hanover Ave., 2nd Floor
Cedar Knolls, NJ 07297
Tel: (973) 326-6789 (outside of NJ)
Tel: (800) 367-6274 (within NJ)
Fax: (973) 326-9467; Web: www.njgroups.org

National Self-Help Clearinghouse
Graduate School & University Center
of the City University of New York
365 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3300
New York, NY 10016
Tel: (212) 817-1822
Web: www.selfhelpweb.org

Self-Help Information Network Exchange (SHINE)
Scranton Life Building
538 Spruce Street, Suite 420
Scranton, PA 18503
Tel: (570) 961-1234
Email: shine@vacnepa.org
Web: www.vacnepa.org

G.S.O. RECORDS INFORMATION
FOR CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

The Records Department at G.S.O. wants to maintain an accurate, up-to-date list of Correctional Facilities' groups. They can do this only with your help. The group information comes from the Correctional Facility Group Information Form. These are sent to, and returned by, all new groups. If you already have this Handbook, chances are you have filled out and sent in a "New A.A. Correctional Facility Group Information Form."

If there are group or contact changes throughout the years, please notify the General Service Office at P.O. Box 459, New York, NY 10163. You can use the enclosed "**A.A. Correctional Facility Group Information Change Form**" to send in changes of mail contact, outside sponsor, etc.

The General Service Conference and A.A. experience suggests that, if possible, "inside" G.S.R.'s or an "outside" group sponsor receive group mail.

GROUP RECORDS

The lined forms enclosed are for your own personal **group records** – a way of recording your group history and growth – and should not be sent to G.S.O. or anywhere else outside your own group.

A.A. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY GROUP INFORMATION CHANGE FORM

GROUP NAME _____

Date: _____

CITY _____

STATE/PROVINCE _____

GROUP SERVICE # _____

DELEGATE AREA # _____

DISTRICT # _____

No. OF MEMBERS _____

OLD INFORMATION

GROUP or MAIL CONTACT

(Check one of the above)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____

LANGUAGE: (Check one please)

English Spanish French

SPONSOR

(Correctional Facility Personnel or outside A.A.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone #: () _____

NEW INFORMATION

GROUP or MAIL CONTACT

(Check one of the above)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____

LANGUAGE: (Check one please)

English Spanish French

SPONSOR

(Correctional Facility Personnel or outside A.A.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone #: () _____

"Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. Membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group they have no other affiliation." — Tradition Three (the long form)

"Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose — that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." — Tradition Five (the long form)

"Unless there is approximate conformity to A.A.'s Twelve Traditions, the group . . . can deteriorate and die." — Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 174

A complete name and address must be furnished to assure mail delivery
PLEASE RETURN TO: GRAND CENTRAL STATION, P. O. BOX 459, NEW YORK, NY 10163

A.A. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY GROUP INFORMATION CHANGE FORM

GROUP NAME _____

Date: _____

CITY _____

STATE/PROVINCE _____

GROUP SERVICE # _____

DELEGATE AREA # _____

DISTRICT # _____

No. OF MEMBERS _____

OLD INFORMATION

GROUP or MAIL CONTACT
(Check one of the above)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____

LANGUAGE: (Check one please)

English Spanish French

SPONSOR

(Correctional Facility Personnel or outside A.A.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone #: () _____

NEW INFORMATION

GROUP or MAIL CONTACT
(Check one of the above)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____

LANGUAGE: (Check one please)

English Spanish French

SPONSOR

(Correctional Facility Personnel or outside A.A.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone #: () _____

"Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. Membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group they have no other affiliation." — Tradition Three (the long form)

"Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose — that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." — Tradition Five (the long form)

"Unless there is approximate conformity to A.A.'s Twelve Traditions, the group . . . can deteriorate and die." — Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 174

A complete name and address must be furnished to assure mail delivery
PLEASE RETURN TO: GRAND CENTRAL STATION, P. O. BOX 459, NEW YORK, NY 10163

SUGGESTED GROUP RECORDS--GROUP SERVANTS AND MEMBERS

(For group use only)

GROUP NUMBER _____

GROUP NAME _____

MEETING PLACE _____

GROUP MAILING ADDRESS _____

DATE: _____

TIMES: _____

Service Position	Members Name	A.A. Anniversary	Availability		Miscellaneous Notes
			Speaking	12th Step	

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GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
475 RIVERSIDE DRIVE, NEW YORK, NY 10115 (212) 870-3400
(Between 119th and 120th Streets)



Please direct all communications to:

GRAND CENTRAL STATION
P.O. BOX 459
NEW YORK, NY 10163
FAX# 212-870-3003

Dear A.A. Friend,

We are glad that you expressed an interest in having an A.A. member on the outside correspond with you to share A.A. experience, strength and hope. This is *not a pen-pal service*, and Alcoholics Anonymous does not assign *sponsors*; however, we can link you to an outside A.A. member with whom you can share your experience as it relates to your problems with alcohol, through our Corrections Correspondence Service. Once you have made contact, that person may be willing to sponsor you.

NOTE: This Corrections Correspondence Service is available only to those with at least six months or more left to serve, and this is a random match, with men writing to men and women writing to women.

In addition to observing the rules in your facility regarding mail, the following guidelines drawn from shared A.A. experience may help when writing to an A.A. member on the outside:

1. Share in a general way in the opening letter what it used to be like when drinking, how you got into A.A., and what it is like today. If your problem is mainly with drugs, we suggest you write to N.A.
2. Remember this is not a pen pal club. It is to share the A.A. program and sobriety.
3. Answer letters or ask to be removed from the correspondence list.
4. Upon release or a new address, notify G.S.O. and your A.A. correspondent.

All here join me in sending wishes for all the best A.A. has to offer a day at a time.

Yours sincerely,

Staff Member
Corrections Desk

CORRESPONDENCE FORM - PLEASE PRINT - RETURN TO GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF A.A.

Yes, I have at least six months more to serve on my sentence and would like to share experience regarding recovery from alcoholism with an outside A.A. member by participating in the Corrections Correspondence Service.

I am a: MALE FEMALE (please circle one) Estimated release date _____

Name: _____ My Number _____
 (First and Last)

Street Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

CCS-2 (6/08)



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CCS-2 (6/08)

THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL IS INCLUDED WITH THIS PACKAGE

Item #	Conference-approved Literature and Other Service Material
CF-36	The A.A. Group Handbook for Groups That Meet in Correctional Facilities
(BM-31)	The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service
(P-1)	This is A.A.
(P-2)	44 Questions
(P-3)	Is A.A. For You
(P-4)	Young People and A.A.
(P-9)	Memo to an Inmate Who May Be an Alcoholic
(P-11)	The A.A. Member - Medications and Other Drugs
(P-13)	Do You Think You're Different?
(P-15)	Questions and Answers on Sponsorship
(P-16)	The A.A. Group
(P-17)	A.A. Tradition - How It Developed
(P-18)	Inside A.A.
(P-19)	G.S.R.
(P-24)	A Newcomer Asks
(P-26)	A.A. in Correctional Facilities
(P-33)	It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell
(P-37)	Too Young?
(P-38)	What Happened to Joe?
(P-39)	It Happened to Alice
(P-42)	A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous
(P-43)	Twelve Traditions Illustrated
(P-45)	Circles of Love and Service
(P-47)	Understanding Anonymity
(F-1)	A.A. at a glance
(F-3)	Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix
(F-6)	Your A.A. General Service Office
(F-8)	Problems Other Than Alcohol
(F-36)	Individual Copy Box 4-5-9
(F-25)	Central Offices, Intergroups, and Answering Services for the U.S. and Canada Directory
(R-2)	Business Reply Envelope