A DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to A.A.’s future: To place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives and the lives of those to come.

I am responsible…

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that: I am responsible.

Alcoholics Anonymous
in your Community

HOW THE FELLOWSHIP OF A.A. WORKS IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO HELP ALCOHOLICS

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 history of A.A. is studded with the names of nonalcoholics, professionals and others who have interested themselves in the A.A. recovery program. Thousands of us owe our lives to these people, and our debt of gratitude knows no bounds.
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New York, NY 10163

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35M—3/18 (MCCA)
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The program A.A. suggests consists basically of “Twelve Steps” designed for personal recovery from alcoholism.

The Fellowship today is in more than 180 countries. Approximately two million alcoholics have achieved sobriety in A.A., but members recognize that their program is not always effective with all alcoholics.

What does A.A. NOT do?

A.A. does not: furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover; solicit members; engage in or sponsor research or experiments; treat individuals or groups in hospital or other institutions; issue reports on alcoholics or treatments; hold recovery seminars; perform professional services such as those listed above.

What can you expect from A.A.?

1. A.A. members help any alcoholic who demonstrates an interest in staying sober.
2. A.A. members may call on the alcoholic who wishes help — although they may feel it is best for the alcoholic to request such help first.
3. They may help arrange hospitalization.
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What are A.A. groups?

The basic unit in A.A. is the local (neighborhood or city) group, which is autonomous except in matters affecting other A.A. groups or the Fellowship as a whole. No group has power over its members.

About 1,000 are in treatment facilities; over 1,400 are in correctional institutions.

Groups are usually democratic, served by short-term “steering committees” of members. Thus, no group has permanent leadership.

What are A.A. meetings?

Each group holds regular meetings at which members relate their experiences to each other — usually in relation to “Twelve Steps,” suggested for recovery, and “Twelve Traditions,” suggested for relationships within the Fellowship and with the community.

Simplicity of purpose and problems other than alcohol — Some professionals refer to alcoholism 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 those with a drinking problem may attend closed A.A. meetings.

Who are A.A. members?

People who think they have a drinking problem are welcome to attend any A.A. meeting. They become members simply by deciding they are members.

A.A. men and women from all walks of life, from teenagers to a 90-year-old, of all races, with all manner of formal religious affiliations and with none at all.

Where can you find A.A.?

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Next: “Steering committee” of members.
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The movement has adopted a policy of "cooperation but not affiliation" with other organizations concerned with the problem of alcoholism.

Alcoholics Anonymous is self-supporting through its own groups and members' contributions from outside sources. A.A. members preserve personal anonymity at the level of press, films, and broadcast media.

From the beginning, many A.A. members have come to believe that alcoholism is a progressive illness — spiritual and emotional (or mental), as well as physical. The alcoholics we know have seem to have lost the power to control their drinking.

How does A.A. work?
A.A. can be described as a method of treating alcoholism in which the members are supportive of each other, sharing with each other a large body of similar experiences in suffering and recovering from alcoholism.

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What does A.A. 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; render religious services or perform professional services such as those listed above.
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NOTE: An individual A.A. member may do some of these in his or her personal capacity, but this is not part of his or her A.A. membership. Many professionals in the field of alcoholism are also A.A. members. Their professional work, however, is NOT a part of their A.A. membership. A.A. as such does not profess competence to perform professional services such as those listed above.
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From the beginning, many A.A. members have come to believe that alcoholism is a progressive illness — spiritual and emotional (or mental), as well as physical. The alcoholics we know seem to have lost control of their lives and who offer to share their recovery experience freely with others who may have a drinking problem.

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