



## **What is A.A.?**

Alcoholics Anonymous is an informal society of recovering alcoholics in the United States, Canada, and other countries. We meet in local groups, which range in size from a handful in some localities to many hundreds in larger communities, whether in person or online.

## **How A.A. Members Maintain Sobriety**

Members stay away from one drink, one day at a time. Sobriety is maintained through sharing experience, strength and hope at group meetings and through the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, which are suggested as a program of recovery.

## **Current Membership**

We are aware of A.A. activity in approximately 180 countries. Because A.A. has never attempted to keep formal membership lists, it is extremely difficult for A.A. to obtain completely accurate figures on total membership at any given time.

## **Relations with Outside Agencies**

The Fellowship has adopted a policy of “cooperation but not affiliation” with other organizations concerned with the problem of alcoholism. A.A. has no opinion on outside issues and neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

## **How A.A. Is Supported**

Alcoholics Anonymous has a long-standing tradition that only A.A. members can contribute financially to A.A. — and even A.A. members are limited in the amount they can contribute. This keeps A.A. free of outside influences that might divert us from our primary purpose — to help the alcoholic who still suffers.

## **Who Can Attend A.A. Meetings?**

Anyone may attend “open” meetings of A.A. Some open meetings are held for the specific purpose of informing the nonalcoholic public about A.A. Doctors, members of the clergy and public officials are invited to attend. “Closed” A.A. meetings are for A.A. members and for those who have a drinking problem and have a desire to stop drinking.

(OVER)

## How A.A. Started

A.A. was started in 1935 by a New York stockbroker and an Ohio surgeon who had been desperately seeking a solution to their chronic drunkenness. To them, and to the millions who found relief by following their example, the recovery they found from alcoholism was nothing short of miraculous.

They founded A.A. in an effort to help others who suffered from the disease of alcoholism and to stay sober themselves. A.A. grew with the formation of autonomous groups, first in the United States and then around the world.

## How to Find A.A.

Look for Alcoholics Anonymous by searching online or by using the “Find A.A. Near You” feature on the home page of our website, [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). In many areas, a central A.A. office or hotline, staffed mainly by volunteer A.A.s, will be happy to answer your questions and/or put you in touch with those who can.

Those looking for A.A. meetings can also download the *Meeting Guide* app at [www.aa.org/meeting-guide-app](http://www.aa.org/meeting-guide-app)

## 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.

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

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To learn more about A.A., books, pamphlets and videos are available on our website [aa.org](http://aa.org).

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