

→YOU MADE A START!!

If you made a decision and said to yourself, "Yes, I'm one of those people who can not stop drinking and I want some help". You've taken *AA Step One* "**We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.**" You are not alone. You and millions of others have discovered that alcohol is cunning, baffling, powerful, and a symptom of our alcoholism. Now is the time to join the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and find that inner peace and freedom that AA members share.

→MEMBERSHIP IN A.A.

AA Membership is open to all people with a desire to stop drinking.

People with problems in addition to drinking are welcome to become A.A. members. In A.A. we focus on, discuss, and recover from our alcoholism.

People who do not have a problem with their drinking, but do have other problems may seek help by joining other recovery programs.

Alcoholic recovery **only** works when we put down the drink and other non-prescribed mind altering substances. This is not a membership requirement but is a **strong suggestion**.

→GO TO MEETINGS

In the United States A.A. meetings are available every day of the year; mornings, afternoons, and evenings. These meetings are for you and other alcoholics seeking help. Go to as many meetings as you can. Take an AA friend, it's more fun. One A A member said, "*The Big Book is your road map, the meetings are your filling stations.*"

→FINDING A MEETING

A list of local A.A. meetings can be found at most A.A. meetings. The list shows meeting types, locations, days, and times. These lists are generally on a literature table and are provided free of charge. If you don't see one, ask someone. They will be more than happy to help. **The Meeting List is the most important piece of literature when you first enter A.A!**

Meeting lists are also available from Intergroup and Central A.A. offices. Local newspapers often have A.A. meeting listings. A.A. meetings can be found on various internet sites such as:

<http://www.aacapecod.org> Districts 1&2
<http://www.capecodaa.com> Cape Cod Intergroup
<http://www.aemass.org> Eastern Mass
<http://www.aaboston.org> Boston Central Service

After regular meeting attendance you will become familiar with those meetings in your local area.

→OPEN OR CLOSED MEETINGS

OPEN meetings are for all who wish to hear the AA message. You can take members of your family and interested friends. Only members of A.A., however, participate in the discussions.

CLOSED meetings are for alcoholics and people with a desire to stop drinking ONLY.

→TYPES OF MEETINGS INCLUDE

DISCUSSION: All Alcoholics attending can participate in the discussion.

SPEAKER: Other visiting A.A. groups share their stories of recovery.

BIG BOOK STEP STUDY: The 12 Steps and how to do them are discussed in the book "*Alcoholics Anonymous*".

STEP: The 12 Steps are discussed using A.A. Literature such as "*12 Steps and 12 Traditions*"

TRADITIONS: The 12 Traditions are discussed using A.A. Literature such as "*12 Steps and 12 Traditions*"

AA Meetings are open to all alcoholics. Some people are more comfortable with others like themselves. Meetings types above may also list types of people participating such as **M**: men; **W**: women; **S**: Spanish speaking; **YP**: Young people; **G**: gay; etc. However, these meetings do not exclude any alcoholic needing a meeting from attending.

→LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME

Alcoholics Anonymous is a "*One Day at a Time*" way of living. We try to break life into small pieces we can handle. We stay sober one day at a time. or when necessary, one hour at a time. We do our jobs one task at a time. We solve our problems one problem at a time. We clean our past one mess at a time. And we conscientiously try to turn our lives and our will over to a power greater than ourselves. As we grow in A.A. we find this greater power is not ourselves. An old timer once said: "*There are only two things I must remember. 1. That there is such a power, and 2. I am not it.*"

→GET A SPONSOR

Getting an A.A. sponsor (mentor) is a vital part for your recovery. A sponsor will help you to face up to your problems with honesty and courage and without a drink. He or she will show you how to solve problems yourself using tools that A.A. provides.

Here are a few tips on how to get a sponsor:

- (1) Make sober friends by joining a group. Get active within your group. Talk to your members, Go Early-Stay Late.
- (2) Search for someone who is your own sex, has several years of sober experience, is active within A.A. and enjoys his or her sobriety.
- (3) Don't wait. A temporary sponsor for a week or month can be a great help. You can change sponsors later if you want to.
- (4) Get his or her phone number and call them often. This is your responsibility. A sponsor may not chase you.

You can count on sponsors to do their part if you do yours.

→ASK FOR HELP

When you need help your first contact will be your Sponsor. Be sure to keep his/her phone number with you at all times. Your Home Group may also publish a members' phone list. In the event your Sponsor is not available, you can contact another member of your Home Group. Your Home Group Secretary may be able to put you in contact with another group member. Your local Intergroup may also place you in contact with another Alcoholic who may help. If you need some A.A. literature and can't find it, ask your Home Group secretary. A.A. literature is also available for purchase at most Intergroup or Central A.A. Offices.

Most successful A.A. members have found that a simple morning prayer asking for acceptance of our alcoholism, and a removal of the desire to drink for one day helps greatly. An evening prayer thanking for a sober day also helps.

→JOIN A HOME GROUP

When some of us were introduced to A.A. through a particular group, we thought we had been assigned to that group and should not go to other meetings. **Nothing could be further from the truth.** Use your meeting list and feel free to visit other groups. Sooner or later you should settle down to a regular meeting that you will want to call your **Home Group**. There are many types of groups. The home group you choose should be one in which you can get sober, stay sober, and feel that you are a "part of ". Your home group should be a place where you are challenged to keep growing and where you feel you have so many friends you can't afford to stay away. Get active within your home group. Having a home group should not keep you from going to other meetings. Attend as many meetings as you feel the need for, and then a couple more!!

→ READ THE LITERATURE

As soon as you can, we suggest that you read these important A.A. books. These books explain how we use the Twelve Steps to recover and grow. The books also explain A.A. history and how we maintain our unity using the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"Alcoholics Anonymous" (The Big Book)

"12 Steps and 12 Traditions"

"As Bill Sees It"

"Living Sober"

"Came to Believe"

"Daily Reflections"

"A.A. Comes of Age"

"Dr. Bob and the Good Old Timers"

These books are conference approved by the worldwide A.A. group conscience. They can be a constant source of inspiration and understanding. Many of us begin our morning by reading a paragraph or chapter from one of them. They form a basic and important part of our recovery.

Other A.A. literature is available on tables at most meetings. This literature will be helpful as you travel your road to sobriety. There are also excellent A.A. periodicals and pamphlets for us to read.

The *A.A. Grapevine*[™] is a monthly magazine from the A.A. General Service office in New York. It is filled with articles written by alcoholics for the alcoholic. Many A.A.'s call it a *"Meeting in print"*.

→ INCLUDE THE FAMILY

Experience shows that the average practicing alcoholic affects the lives of at least five other people and your alcoholism is a family affair. We find that the family that comes together can often recover together. One way to do this is to share your A.A. experiences with them.

Al-Anon Family Groups[™] is a fellowship designed for members of the alcoholic's family or other affected persons. **Al-Anon** and **Alateen** use the Twelve Steps of recovery to help them understand the alcoholic and to improve their own lives. We suggest that your friends and family find the local **Al-Anon** and **Alateen** meetings in your area.

→ WHEN YOU TRAVEL

Just as you found friends in meetings everywhere in your area, you will find helpful members in almost every part of the world. Whenever you travel, take a copy of the Regional or International A.A. directory with you. These directories contain meetings and names with phone numbers to contact for your particular area. A.A. Directories are available through local A.A. Intergroup or central offices.

If you are moving to, or visiting another area, call A.A. in that area for meetings or contacts. If you have already arrived in a new area you can find local A.A. offices and Intergroups using phone directories or phone information services.

→ SUMMARY

Now you have made a new start. If you are like most of us, we think that you will find these suggestions helpful on your sobriety journey. Remember that if you use the tools A.A. has to offer (Literature, Sponsors, Meetings, Discussion, Fellowship, and Friends), **you never have to be alone.**

The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous wants to provide support and guidance to all alcoholics who reach out for help. **We need you!** Come join us. Become a part of your and our recovery.....and meet a host of new friends!

As you grow in A.A. you will develop relationships with others and soon realize that you are staying sober in spite of yourself. Whatever you think, it will become a power greater than yourself. You will be able to handle life on life's terms, and walk through situations that used to baffle you. You will be able to accept the past and look forward to the future while living in the present. Removing the drink is necessary for recovery, **Learning how to live a happy useful life without the drink is what A.A. is about.**

"Is sobriety all that we are to expect of a spiritual awakening? No, sobriety is only a bare beginning; it is only the first gift of the first awakening. If more gifts are to be received, our awakening has to go on. As it goes on, we find that bit by bit we can discard the old life - the one that did not work - for a new life that can and does work under any conditions whatever. Regardless of worldly success or failure, regardless of pain or joy, regardless of sickness or health, or even death itself, a new life of endless possibilities can be lived if we are willing to continue our awakening through the practice of AA's Twelve Steps."

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WELCOME TO ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS



This Pamphlet provided by the
General Service Districts 1&2 on
Cape Cod and the Islands
PO Box 1450, Dennis Port, MA

A printable copy of this pamphlet is available at:
<http://www.aacapecod.org>

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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