A.A. at a glance

What is A.A.?

Alcoholics Anonymous is a voluntary, worldwide fellowship of men and women from all walks of life who meet together to attain and maintain sobriety. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership.

Current Membership

It is estimated that there are approximately 114,000 groups and over 2,000,000 members in approximately 170 countries.

Relations With Outside Agencies

The Fellowship has adopted a policy of "cooperation but not affiliation" with other organizations concerned with the problem of alcoholism. We have no opinion on issues outside A.A. and neither endorse nor oppose any causes.

How A.A. Is Supported

Over the years, Alcoholics Anonymous has affirmed and strengthened a tradition of being fully self-supporting and of neither seeking nor accepting contributions from non-members. Within the Fellowship, the amount that may be contributed by any individual member is limited to $3,000 a year.

How A.A. Members Maintain Sobriety

A.A. is a program of total abstinence. Members simply 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 suggested Twelve Steps for recovery from alcoholism.

Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is 'Anonymous'

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of A.A. It disciplines the Fellowship to govern itself by principles rather than personalities. We are a society of peers. We strive to make known our program of recovery, not individuals who participate in the program. Anonymity *in the public media* is assurance to all A.A.s, especially to newcomers, that their A.A. membership will not be disclosed.

(OVER)

Anyone May Attend A.A. Open Meetings

Anyone may attend open meetings of A.A. These usually consist of talks by a leader and two or three speakers who share experience as it relates to their alcoholism and their recovery in A.A. Some 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. Closed discussion meetings are for alcoholics only.

How A.A. Started

A.A. was started in 1935 by a New York stockbroker and an Ohio surgeon (both now deceased), who had been "hopeless" drunks. 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 in any telephone directory, your local newspaper or "How to Find A.A. Meetings" on the home page of our Web site www.aa.org. In most urban areas, a central A.A. office or intergroup, staffed mainly by volunteer A.A.s will be happy to answer your questions and/or put you in touch with those who can.

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...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

www.aa.org

For further information on A.A.,
these pamphlets are available on request:
"A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous"
"44 Questions" (and Answers About the A.A. Program)
"This is A.A."

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