

Telephone Numbers

What AA Does

- Helps alcoholics get sober
- Helps sober alcoholics stay sober

What AA Does Not Do

- Furnish initial motivation
- Solicit members
- Charge dues or fees
- Operate clinics or drying-out facilities
- Provide housing, meals or transportation
- Keep membership records
- Follow-up on errant members
- Hold classes
- Practice medicine, psychiatry, or nursing
- Offer professional counseling
- Accept money from non-members
- Do research
- Join councils or social agencies

Individual members may be involved in some of these activities on a personal basis, but not as a part of their membership in AA.

Approved by Nassau InterGroup.

Adapted with appreciation from the
Salt River InterGroup, Phoenix, AZ,
and the

Los Angeles, CA, Central Office.

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Making A Start In Alcoholics Anonymous

A Guide for the Beginner



24 HOUR HotLine:
(516) 292-3040

BUSINESS:
(516) 292-3045
Daily: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
361 HEMPSTEAD TPK
WEST HEMPSTEAD, NY 11552-1342

World Wide Web Address:
<http://www.nassauny-aa.org>
eMail Address:
intergroup@nassauny-aa.org

Try It Our Way

Do you want to not start drinking again? Have you decided that alcohol is taking the best from you and that life has become miserable? If your answer is “yes”, then you are ready for AA and we in AA will be glad to help you.

We have a way of staying stopped that has worked for countless thousands. It can work for you. Our way of staying stopped may not be what you expect. But it works.

Decide right now to try doing it our way. Here are the things that you need to know to get started.

Don't Take the First Drink

Which drink is it that usually puts you beyond where you want to go? The third? The eleventh? The seventeenth? If only we knew how to stop just before that one!

The first drink starts a process that we are unable to stop in time. We are usually sure the “just one more” will be the right amount. Then one more. Then one more. Then...

It is a cold hard fact that if you don't take the first drink, then you can't possibly get drunk. One hundred per cent guaranteed. The process doesn't get started. The first drink is the deadly one because it leads to all of the others. So you need not avoid the ninth or thirteenth, only the first.

Live Life One Day At A Time

How we will handle the next office party or Jane's wedding next month is really unimportant right now. By then we may have already drunk ourselves to death or into an institution.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a “one day at a time” way of living. We try to break life into small manageable pieces. We avoid the first drink one day at a time, and if necessary one hour at a time. We solve our problems one problem at a time. And we try to give most of our worries to someone

Getting Started in Alcoholics Anonymous

wiser than ourselves, to a ‘great spirit’ in whatever form we view something that is bigger than ourselves.

We ask for help from other AA members, our sponsors, and a Higher Power. We learn to depend on them for our recovery.

Phone Others

Most AA members are glad to give you their phone number, and more surprisingly, are pleased to have you call them to tell them that you are still sober, or maybe answer questions. Get some phone numbers.

Go To Meetings

There are many AA meetings at most times of day. Get a directory of meetings in your area. They are available on the literature table at nearly all meetings. If not, ask someone where to get one. Take in as many meetings as you possibly can. Shop around for the meetings that you like best. If you happen to dislike the meetings, then think of them as the bitter medicine that you would gladly take to cure a deadly disease.

Read the Books

The basic text of the AA program is the book Alcoholics Anonymous, also called the Big Book. The first half describes alcoholism and our way of avoiding drinking. The second half gives many case histories. Some of us didn't like the style of writing, but we are sober anyway. Some of us were so fuzzy-minded that we couldn't retain what we read, so we doubled up on meetings.

The book Living Sober gives many down-to-earth practical suggestions for avoiding the first drink and ordering our lives when we are newly sober. Many of us found this book to be very useful at first, because it is written in plain English and we didn't yet know some of the AA jargon.

Get A Sponsor

There are some who got sober without a sponsor. Most of them later admitted that life would have gotten better faster if they had a sponsor from the beginning. Our experience tells us that you have a much better chance with a sponsor than without one.

Ask a few people how they got their sponsors or read the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship.” Most AA members will be pleased to be asked, though not all are ready to be sponsors.

Your sponsor will listen to you and give you suggestions; tell you what works for them, point out trouble spots and help you decide what to do. In other words, your sponsor helps you to understand the AA program and guides you along the path to recovery.

You can usually count on sponsors to do their part, and to encourage you to do yours.

Have A Home Group

When some of us were introduced to AA through a particular group, we thought we had been assigned to that group and could not go to other meetings. Nothing could be further from the truth. Feel free to visit various groups. But sooner or later you should settle down to a regular meeting that you want to consider your “home group.”

However, 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 some more.

There are many different types of groups available. The home group you choose should be one in which you can get sober, stay sober, and feel that you are part of it.

Your home group ought to be the place where you are challenged to keep growing and where you feel you have so many friends you can't afford to stay away.

A Daily Reprieve