



ALKI-LINE



TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 27 No. 2 Apr. 2018 - May 2018

How did you hear about AA?

If AA relied solely on word of mouth to spread our message that would make us similar to a secret society, you'd have to know a member, or someone who knew a member to find a meeting. Instead, we rely on our service committees to make sure AA is known to the general public and professionals that may come into contact with suffering alcoholics during their daily work.

In the early days of AA we got a lot of free press, as it was a miraculous new phenomenon. As AA matured the miracle of recovery was no longer sensational news and press coverage lessened. How then could we let the suffering alcoholic know there is a fellowship with a solution?

Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) was formed to reach out to doctors, clergy, law enforcement, jails, institutions, judges, teachers and other professionals. We offered these professionals an option to direct problem drinkers to AA as a solution to the baffling and heartbreaking riddle of the active alcoholic. Every member of AA owes their recovery to this type of service work. Rowland H., a member of the Oxford Group and later AA, worked with local judges, and asked them to turn problem drunks over to him as an alternative to jail. One of those turned over to Rowland was a heavy hitter from Vermont by the name of Ebby T. Ebby got sober for a time, long enough to contact an old drinking buddy and carry a message of hope to him. His name was Bill Wilson. Were it not for our professional friend taking a chance with Rowland and Ebby, AA would not exist.

Some alcoholics, we found, are not so fortunate to come into contact with a professional that had the knowledge of AA. How then do we let the general public know AA exists and can save their lives? The Public Information (PI) committee was formed for this purpose. We began placing schedule books and pamphlets with basic information about AA and how to contact us in public places where drunks turn up, like emergency rooms, police stations, even libraries and churches. We found this an effective method to reach even more people, whether alcoholic, family member, friend, or business associate.

Now what of advertising? Should AA carry its message via newspapers, radio and television? We have a tradition of anonymity; we are also a program of attraction, not promotion. We found that placing public service announcements via these media outlets is well within the traditions if we follow a few simple guidelines; Members names and photos should never be used. Also, we should avoid

sensational advertisement. We don't make any claim that AA will help you get your spouse back, keep you out of jail; it doesn't soften hands while you do dishes, or turn a sandwich into a Manwich. These public service messages simply state that AA is available to help the suffering alcoholic, and how to contact us.

—Charlie F., Dist 1. Public Information Committee Chairperson

¿Cómo se enteró de AA?

Si AA dependiera únicamente en pasar nuestro mensaje de boca en boca, eso nos haría similares a una sociedad secreta; tendría que conocer a un miembro o a alguien que conozca a un miembro para encontrar una reunión. En vez de esto, nosotros dependemos de nuestros comités de servicio para asegurarnos de que AA sea conocido para el público general y para los profesionales que tal vez entren en contacto con alcohólicos que aún sufren durante su trabajo diario.

En los primeros años de AA nosotros recibimos bastante prensa gratis, ya que era un nuevo fenómeno milagroso. Según maduró AA el milagro de la recuperación ya no era una noticia sensacional y disminuyó la cobertura de la prensa. ¿Entonces, cómo podíamos dejarle saber al alcohólico que aún sufre que existe una comunidad con una solución?

La Cooperación con la Comunidad Profesional (CCP) fue formada para comunicarse con doctores, el clero, oficiales de la ley, cárceles, instituciones, jueces, maestros y otros profesionales. Nosotros les ofrecimos a estos profesionales una opción para dirigir a los bebedores problemáticos a AA como una solución a ese acertijo desconcertante y desgarrador del alcohólico activo. Cada miembro de AA le debe su recuperación a este tipo de trabajo de servicio. Rowland H., miembro del Grupo Oxford y luego de AA, trabajó con jueces locales, y luego les pedía que le entregara los borrachos problemáticos a él como una alternativa a la cárcel. Uno de ellos que fue entregado a Rowland era uno de peso pesado de Vermont con el nombre de Ebby T. Ebby logró estar sobrio por un tiempo, lo suficiente para contactar a un amigo con el que bebía y llevarle un mensaje de esperanza. Su nombre era Bill Wilson. Si no hubiese sido por nuestro amigo profesional tomándose la oportunidad con Rowland y Ebby, AA no existiría.

Algunos alcohólicos, hemos encontrado, no son tan afortunados de entrar en contacto con un profesional que tenga el conocimiento de AA. ¿Entonces cómo le hacemos saber al público en general que existe AA y que puede salvarle su vida? El Comité de Información Pública fue formado para este propósito. Comenzamos a poner libros de horarios y folletos

con información básica acerca de AA y cómo contactarnos en lugares públicos en donde terminan llegando los borrachos, como en salas de emergencias, estaciones de policía, hasta en bibliotecas y en iglesias. Encontramos que este era un método efectivo para alcanzar a aun más personas, ya sean alcohólicos, miembros de su familia, amistades o socio de negocios.

¿Ahora qué con hacer publicidad? ¿Debe AA llevar su mensaje vía periódicos, radio y televisión? Tenemos una tradición de anonimato; también somos un programa de atracción, no de promoción. Encontramos que hacer anuncios de servicio público vía estos medios está dentro de las tradiciones si seguimos algunas simples guías; Nunca se deben usar los nombres ni fotos de los miembros. También, debemos evitar la publicidad sensacional. No hacemos ninguna afirmación de que AA lo va ayudar a recuperar a su esposo o esposa, lo va a mantener fuera de la cárcel; no suaviza las manos mientras lava los platos, ni convierte un sándwich en un "Manwich". Estos mensajes de servicio público simplemente dicen que AA está disponible para ayudar al alcohólico que aún sufre y cómo contactarnos.

–Charlie F.,
Distrito 1. Coordinador del Comité de Información Pública

Public Information

Be a volunteer and represent your district on the public information committee. Help us carry the message into our community. The purpose of this committee is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who still suffers through the use of the media and public speakers. This committee serves as the central source of information that is made available to the public regarding Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee ensures that any information the public receives is correct and is given within the guidelines of the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Contact the PI chair by emailing pi@ct-aa.org.

How You Can Help

Presently, we are working on many projects for PI. In addition to updating the web site, we bring books to libraries, public service announcements (PSAs), Youth speaker program for schools, health fairs and getting volunteers to take a commitment to maintain a literature rack at a library, hospital, social service, etc. This is called "adopt a rack." If you are interested in volunteering or getting information on volunteering please email pi@ct-aa.org.

Public service announcements (PSAs) are available for download or viewing from the GSO website, www.aa.org.

Public Information Workbook

The Public Information Workbook is part of a kit that describes what AA can and cannot do in carrying the message to the general public. Read the PI Workbook on AA.org: www.aa.org/assets/en_US/public-information-committees/m-27i-public-information-workbook

**Para ponerse en contacto con AA, llame:
855-ESPANCT**

The Quiet Mind

As one of many folks in AA seeking a fulfilling and worthwhile life, I discovered that many aspects of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous are based on wisdom embraced by cultures around the world for many thousands of years. I still find that reassuring.

Having grown up in a chaotic, alcoholic household, I became used to living in a world of uncertainty, turmoil, and stress. All of this contributed to my constant feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, and depression. Early in my teenage years, I discovered an instant cure for these all is not right in the universe emotions: alcohol. A couple of swigs and magically the weight of the world was lifted from my shoulders. The only problem was that this cure-all was depressive, addictive, and temporary. When the alcohol wore off, all those negative emotions were still there and the problems about which I worried were even worse. The worse they got, the more I drank. My drinking progressed unabated, whether or not I even had a reason.

When I finally hit bottom and discovered AA, the one thing I really wanted was to be free of all of life's concerns. After studying and practicing the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, it became clear to me that they were a roadmap to the rewards of sobriety: a simple, relatively carefree life, and reconnection with humanity. The steps taught me humility, understanding myself as I really am not as I pretended to be. Further, they pointed out how to change myself for the better, clean up the wreckage of the past, and maintain a simple, truthful existence with my fellows.

Practicing the tenets of the AA program has enabled me to be "reasonably happy a reasonable amount of the time", and to receive the ultimate prize of a sober life: a quiet mind.

–Paul R.

Jump Start

Watching the quiet dawn turn gold
Feeling new in restful meditation
Pain-free, no longer old
The flash lingered brief
Truth tweaked my brain
Gratitude held tight
As reality ruled the day
And age displayed her might.

–Philip T., *New Britain*

Insight

Greater humility sought
By the strong or not
Finding nowhere taught
Practice what they've got.

–Tom, *New Britain*

Jails, Institutions, and Death

While the phrase "two out of three ain't bad" comes to mind, death was always close at hand. I had the jails aspect pretty well covered by drunken rampages and DUI nights spent in lockup. I never thought my actions would have given me a four-year sentence with the CT Department of Corrections, a police standoff, and a suicide attempt, or result in destroying my physical home, and more importantly, losing a loving family who cared deeply for me. This should have been the wake-up call I needed. But it wasn't.

I spent years dealing (or not dealing) with my bipolar illness, eventually landing in too many institutions to be able to count. I was unable to stay on the path of recovery. I would walk out the doors and within days pick up a drink or drug; no plan, no vision, and no one mattered. The only thing that really mattered was getting my hands on my next drink or drug. Getting back on a path to destruction seemed normal for me.

This destructive behavior resulted in a three-year and eight-month prison stay. Upon my release from prison I was able to stay sober for two years. The thought of going back to prison for violating my probation was enough to keep me sober for that time. I did get a sponsor; however, he became sick and I tended more to his care than working the steps. I did attend meetings but I cannot say that they were on a daily or even weekly basis. Then, in an instant, two years of sobriety was gone. I picked up that first drink which led to a drunken night and the possibility of a five-year prison sentence.

I admit my trying to take the "heat off" originally put me on a path of leading a "normal life." The same drive for a drink or drug was taken over by a more tenacious drive to stay sober. My family and friends (many from the program) saw it and were present for me in court upon sentencing. The judge said that in her 12 years on the bench it was the most difficult decision she had ever made. I was given another opportunity at freedom!

I took this opportunity one day at a time. I started attending AA meetings on a regular basis to establish consistency. I did the next right thing and made coffee, chaired meetings, and finally became a sponsor. Now, I add one additional thing on a daily basis: I ask my Higher Power to look over me and help keep me sober. I thank Him for each previous day as well. I trust my Higher Power to guide me in my thoughts, my circumstances, and my future.

If your struggles have been anything like mine, give AA with its meetings, its fellowship and the Steps a try. What have you got to lose? More importantly, there is so much to gain.

—Ted K.

Responsibility Pledge

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

And for that,
I am responsible!

Life on Life's Terms

Is allowing my free-spirit mind
to conjure, bump and grind,
feel lost in utter confusion
time spent in daffy illusion?

When inside
Sees the light
Everything is right
On life's tide ride

Where the mind goes
Be it fantasy or woes
Wisely share
Breathe free air

God takes care
Hide and hair
Dressed or bare
Everywhere

—Philip T.

Serenity

With clarity of your
Presence near
I walk thru my days
Without fear
Your guiding hand always
By my side
I'm soaring with love
And enjoying the ride
Thank you Lord for this
New lease on life
The feeling of ease and
Peace without strife
Into my life new people
Have come
I can't believe the
Things I've done
I never thought that
I'd be here
Feeling more joy and
Peace year by year
Praying inside this never
Goes away
Always holding you close
Day by day
So I'll stay by your side
Dear Lord
And always live by your
Spoken word.

—Evelyn, Shelton CT

**How to reach AA:
866-STEPS12**

The Three Rs: A Lesson Learned 35 Years Ago

(Reprinted from June - July 2015)

A crusty old man with a heart of gold taught me about relapse symptoms a long time ago in Annapolis, Maryland. His name was Tom R. I want to pass on a bit of the wisdom he shared with me that has helped me stay sober over 35 years.

Tom would talk about relapse every share, how relapse can happen at any time, and how you and I are especially vulnerable during our first year of recovery. Relapse to active alcoholism after six months or more of abstinence is surely an act of insanity. After all, the physical need to drink has long since passed. The mental obsession to drink, however, takes longer to overcome.

Admitting to "stinking-thinking" will keep you and me from picking up a drink again. If the symptoms are caught early enough and recognized, you and I can change our thinking. Reframing the mental obsession to drink happens only when behavior changes. I like to remember "Move a Muscle, Change a Thought."

Tom R. always talked about the three Rs of relapse. There are three states of mind that cause relapse if not discovered. They are *Resentment*, *Remorse*, and *Reservations*. You and I are vulnerable to relapse when we exhibit one or more of the Rs. Relapse can be inevitable if we are continually *Resentful* of others, full of *Remorse*, or *Reserving* the right to do as we please in matters compromising recovery. Remembering that a mental relapse precedes a physical relapse helps keep me in the moment and helps me do the next right thing.

One day at a time is the key to staying sober in the long term. Learning and living the Twelve Steps affords us the ability to be "weller than well," so we all need to remember the three Rs. Thanks Tom R.!

—John F-B.

Service Opportunity: Bridging the Gap

Perform 12th Step work by serving as a temporary contact and bringing someone that is leaving a correctional or treatment facility to their first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Suggested requirements: 1 year of continuous sobriety, working the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and the 12 Traditions, as well as a willingness to serve.

To get involved, email btg@ct-aa.org and be sure to include your name, gender, length of sobriety, phone number, and location.

How to reach AA:
866-STEPS12

Para ponerse en contacto con AA, llame:
855-ESPANCT

Save The Date

Spring Conference Assembly

May 19, 2018 — 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
VFW Hall, 41 Veterans Drive, New Britain

Soberfest Golf

June 1, 2018 @ 9:00 am. Please arrive by 7:00 am
River Ridge Golf Course, 259 Preston Road, Griswold
Details & Registration: www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events/soberfest/

Soberfest 2018

June 1 – June 3, 2018
Odetah Camping Resort, 358 Bozrah Street Extension, Bozrah
Details & Registration: www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events/soberfest/

Rompiendo Fronteras / Breaking Frontiers 2018

La Espiritualidad Sin Fronteras / Spirituality with No Barriers
Domingo 29 de julio de 2018 / Sunday, July 29, 2018
Hamden Plains United Methodist Church
15 Church Street, Hamden
www.ct-aa.org/rompiendo-fronteras/

Visit www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events for more info.

We Want To Hear From You!

Share your stories, essays, articles, poetry, etc... with others through the Alki-Line.

We are accepting submissions of one page or less:

Email: alki-line@ct-aa.org

Mail: Alki-Line, 112 E. Main St, Meriden, CT 06450

Hand material to a GSR

¡Queremos saber más de Usted!

Mándenos las historias personales, los ensayos, las opiniones, la poesía, etc... y entérenos más de usted en el Alki-Line.

Se puede entregar una página o menos de las historias a una de los siguiente:

Por el correos electrónicos: alki-line@ct-aa.org

Por el correos: Alki-Line, 112 E. Main St, Meriden, CT 06450

O De mano: a su GSR or Representativo de Alki-Line

Alki-Line

This newsletter is by and for alcoholics; however, we review submissions by all interested in the AA program of recovery. Material may be edited for clarity and length. This newsletter and earlier issues can be downloaded at www.ct-aa.org.

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