



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
SPEAKING TO THE NON-AA
PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

JO D - AREA 83 CPC CHAIR

MAY 2021

WHY? TO FULFILL OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

- Fulfill our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who is still suffering
- Provide accurate and consistent information about alcoholics anonymous to professionals and future professionals
- Establish communication with professionals in the community
- Find ways to cooperate without affiliating

TELL THEM WHAT YOU'RE GONNA TELL THEM

- That you're there as a member of - not a spokesperson for – A.A.
- Not there to tell your story the way you would at a meeting of AA
- There to dispel the myths
- There to explain what AA does and what it does not do

TELL THEM HOW WE UNDERSTAND ALCOHOLISM

- Recognized by both the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association as a “disease” in 1956
- Health Canada says people who drink too much may develop a medical condition called alcohol use disorder (AUD). Like other substance use disorders, AUD is a mental health disorder
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/alcohol.html#a1>
- A.A. members call it a disease – a progressive illness – which can never be cured but which can be arrested
 - an allergy of the body and a mental obsession which cannot be managed by willpower

TELL THEM HOW ONE TRUSTEE DESCRIBED IT

“...once you get into that place of having alcohol run your life, it’s like having an allergy to alcohol

“and it’s very helpful to tell people, look alcohol is special for you – It’s different for you than it is for other people

“Alcohol in your situation is a poison.

“But I think the key concept is that it’s poisonous, it’s addictive, that the neurochemical changes in the brain caused by frequent and constant exposure to alcohol are such that people are no longer free to decide whether they’re going to drink or not and, if they drink, they’re not free to decide how much they are going to drink

**Class A Trustee William D. Clark., M.D.
Lecturer in Medicine, Harvard Medical School**

TELL THEM HOW AA GOT STARTED

- In 1935 in Akron, Ohio as the outcome of a meeting between Bill W., a New York stock analyst and Dr. Bob S., an Akron surgeon
- Both had been helpless alcoholics
- Prior to their meeting, each had been involved with the Oxford Group – a mostly non-alcoholic fellowship that emphasized universal spiritual values in daily living

TELL THEM ABOUT ANONYMITY

- Alcoholics Anonymous is not an anonymous organization. It's members are.
- The name AA itself – as well as it's phone numbers and websites – should be known
 - accurate and consistent information on AA needs to be made available
- Ask that they respect the anonymity principle too

TELL THEM AA IS BUT ONE PATH TO RECOVERY

- Alcoholics Anonymous is an international fellowship of men and women who have had a drinking problem. It is nonprofessional, self-supporting, multiracial, apolitical, and available almost everywhere. There are no age or education requirements. Membership is open to anyone who wants to do something about his or her drinking problem.

Source: aa.org F-2

ONE THAT WORKS FOR OVER 2 MILLION* OF US

	Groups	Members
United States	66,345	1,261,838
Canada	5,091	84,891
Correctional Facilities	1,607	40,218
Loners/Internationalists	1	168
U.S. & Canada Total	73,044	1,487,115
Outside U.S. and Canada	53,308	643,304
Worldwide Total	125,352	2,130,419

*2019. Estimates only. General Service Office does not keep membership records

A.A. is aware of activity in 180 countries with 62 autonomous general service offices in other lands

TELL THEM ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP

- 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.
 - Power in one alcoholic sharing their story with another
 - Fellowship alone is not enough
 - Twelve steps an essential element

TELL THEM OUR ONE ADMISSION REQUIREMENT

- Only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking
 - Singleness of purpose
 - Some professionals include alcoholism in broader category of “substance abuse” with the result that they refer some non-alcoholics to AA
 - Explain difference between open and closed meetings

Source: CPC Workbook, p. 7

TELL THEM HOW AA IS ACCESSIBLE

- There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.
 - A.A. accepts money from no one but its own members
 - Even some limitations on the amount a member can contribute

TELL THEM WE HAVE NO AFFILIATIONS

- 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.
 - We cooperate without affiliating
 - We may put on meetings at rehab/detox centres but are not connected to any
 - We are not linked to other twelve-step programs
 - Close relationship with Al-Anon Family Groups

TELL THEM HOW AVAILABLE AA IS

ORDINARILY IN OTTAWA

- Over 90 Groups
- 161 meetings in the Ottawa area every week
 - 150 English
 - 7 French
 - 1 Russian
 - 1 Spanish
- 44 Open Speaker meetings – you can attend these
 - 40 English
 - 4 French

DURING PANDEMIC IN OTTAWA

- 126 meetings online every week
- 23 of them are Open meetings

ANYWHERE ANYTIME

- Use the Meeting Guide App

https://www.aa.org/content-files/pics_gen/AA_app_logo_registered_low.png



WHAT A.A. DOES NOT DO

- Solicit members
- Engage in or sponsor research
- Made medical or psychological or spiritual diagnoses or prognoses
- Provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money, or any other welfare or social service
- Accept money from anyone but its members
- Provide letters of reference to parole boards, court officials, social agencies, etc.

TELL THEM HOW THEY MAY PLAY A ROLE

- Over half (57%) of members said they were referred to A.A. by a counselor, medical or mental health professional.
- Before coming to A.A., 59% of members received some type of treatment or counselling and the majority of them (74%) said it played an important part in directing them to A.A.
- After coming to A.A., 58% of members received some type of treatment or counselling and the majority of these people (84%) said it played an important part in their recovery from alcoholism

HERE IS WHAT ONE EAP/HR EMPLOYER SAYS

- I really encourage everyone in the helping professions to learn more about A.A.
- There are some misconceptions that A.A. is not for everyone but in fact A.A. has been proven to be extremely effective for preventing relapse and supporting recovery especially for employed individuals.
- The beauty of A.A. is that it is a one day at a time program. One does not make a commitment to A.A. for life; one makes a commitment to undertake certain activities, each day, one day at a time.

Brenda Blair
MBA, CEAP
President, Blair Consulting Group
aa.org PSA video for Employment/Human Resource Professionals

TELL THEM ABOUT THE RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Visit [Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa.org\)](https://www.aa.org) to find information specifically for professionals
- On main splash page, see the 3 videos for professionals
- For professionals tab [Alcoholics Anonymous : Information for Professionals... \(aa.org\)](https://www.aa.org) brings them to literature
- [Alcoholics Anonymous : About A.A. - Newsletter for Professionals \(aa.org\)](https://www.aa.org)
- YouTube channel: [Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

IF YOU'VE ONLY GOT FIVE MINUTES: FOCUS ON THE AS

- Alcohol – singleness of purpose
- Anonymous – not the organization, just the members
- Abstinence – unlike some other harm reduction recovery programs
- Accessible – free, everyone is welcome
- Available – immediately, no waiting list, daily meetings
- Amateurs – non professional – one alcoholic sharing with another alcoholic
- Aa.org – good place to learn more

RESOURCES FOR YOU AT AREA83AA.ORG

- This presentation – just change the headers
- Fall 2019 workshop presentation:
[Speaking at Non-AA meetings OC19 Final-compressed.pdf](#)
- Co-operation with the Professional Community Power Point presentation.
[CPC Presentation - Revised Nov. 22, 2016](#)
- [Public Talks Full Script.docx](#)

A U.S. JUDGE TELLS US

- “You have to think about the fact that the justice system is really fueled by alcohol”
- “many reasons by people are in court; and not just criminals, but underneath it is the fact that somebody involved in those cases is an alcoholic and needs help in finding recovery”

Class A Trustee Linda L. Chezem, J.D., Indiana Court of Appeals, Retired;
Professor, Purdue University;
Adjunct Professor, Indiana University School of Medicine

PROBATION OFFICER TELLS US

“I think there is an absolute connection between alcoholism and crime and statistics show that 80% of offenders are either addicted to alcohol or drugs or both. And so it really seems to be a causation of crime.”

Class A Trustee Jeanne S. Woodford
Chief Adult Probation Officer, San Francisco
Former Director, California Department of Corrections

A WARDEN NOTICED

- “Well, when I was a warden it was the first time I came in contact with A.A. They came into the institution, asked to see me and we set up the group. I noticed quite a change in the inmates that were in that group. So that’s why I was first very impressed.”

Class A Trustee Dr. Allen Ault, Dean
College of Justice and Safety, Eastern Kentucky University
Former Warden and Commissioner of State Department of Correction

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL POINTS OUT

- “...once you get into that place of having alcohol run your life, it’s like having an allergy to alcohol
- “and it’s very helpful to tell people, look alcohol is special for you – It’s different for you than it is for other people
- “Alcohol in your situation is a poison.
- “... think the key concept is that it’s poisonous, it’s addictive ... that the neurochemical changes in the brain caused by frequent and constant exposure to alcohol are such that people are no longer free to decide whether they’re going to drink or not and, if they drink, they’re not free to decide how much they are going to drink

Class A Trustee William D. Clark, M.D.
Lecturer in Medicine Harvard Medical School

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL SHARED

- I was amazed at the level of support
- I was amazed at the kind of people that came to meetings – they were of all stripes
- A lot people are very talented but because of problems of alcoholism are not able to be reliable and be responsible; but AA through its principles and through the twelve steps really help people achieve sobriety and they're able to then become very productive and responsible members of the workforce
- Through the structured services and through the literature, they are able to reach all types of individuals whether or not they're minorities, whether or not we're talking about gay and lesbians, elderly, the young, AA is there

Class A Trustee Elaine McDowell, PhD
Former Director, U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
General Service Board of A.A., Trustee Emerita

The image features a dark blue background with white, stylized circuit board traces in the corners. These traces consist of straight lines that meet at right angles, ending in small circles, resembling electronic components or nodes on a board. The traces are located in the top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right corners, framing the central text.

CPC@AREA83AA.ORG

EMAIL ME FOR COPIES OF DOCUMENTS AND/OR LINKS THAT I MAY REFER TO TODAY

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

IF YOU WANT TO BE ON MY EMAIL LIST FOR FUTURE WORKSHOPS