

EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE

# The “God” Word

Agnostic and Atheist  
Members in A.A.

*ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS*<sup>®</sup> 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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## **The “God” Word**

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## Introduction

A.A. is not a religious organization. Alcoholics Anonymous has only one requirement for membership, and that is the desire to stop drinking. There is room in A.A. for people of all shades of belief and non-belief.

Many members believe in some sort of god, and we have members who come from and practice all sorts of religions, but many are also atheist or agnostic. It's important to remember that A.A. is not a religious organization; we have a simple idea that there is a power greater than us as individuals.

What we all have in common is that the program helps us find an inner strength that we were previously unaware of — where we differ is in how we identify the source. Some people have thought of the word “God” as standing for “good orderly direction,” or even “group of drunks,” but many of us believe that there is something bigger than ourselves that is helping us today.

This power may lie within some person's religious beliefs, or it can be completely separate from any religion. For example, one member looks at the sea and accepts that it is a power greater than him. We could ask ourselves, “Do I believe that somehow there is a *power greater than myself?*”

As A.A. co-founder Bill W. wrote in 1965:

*We have atheists and agnostics. We have people of nearly every race, culture and religion. In A.A. we are supposed to be bound together in the kinship of a common suffering. Consequently, the full individual liberty to practice any creed or principle or therapy whatever should be a first consideration for us all. Let us not, therefore, pressure anyone with our individual or even our collective views. Let us instead accord each other the respect and love that is due to every human being as he tries to make his way toward the light. Let us always try to*

*be inclusive rather than exclusive; let us remember that each alcoholic among us is a member of A.A., so long as he or she declares.*

Whatever you do, please don't let someone else's religious beliefs prevent you from finding the solution that is available to you through Alcoholics Anonymous.

## **An Atheist's Experience in A.A.**

My name is Paul, and I am an alcoholic. I am an atheist. I believe there probably is no God. I cannot prove there is no God, because it is impossible to prove a negative statement like that. I have been an atheist since long before I came to A.A. I have a higher power. It is very tangible, and it is easy to understand and to contact: It is the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I came to Alcoholics Anonymous a beaten man. I am a very lucky, grateful person. I have not had a drink since that first meeting, one day at a time. When I came to that first meeting, the word “God” in the Steps — and subsequently when I read the Big Book — did trouble me, but I was desperate. I went to lots of meetings, listened and read, and did not pick up that first drink. I started on our program of recovery. In the following years, I realized that Bill W. is very clear in the Big Book. He refers repeatedly to the God or higher power “of your understanding.” The God in the Big Book is the God of Bill W.’s understanding.

I had tried many times to stop and to control my drinking. I could stop for a day, a few days — and, 18 months before I came to A.A., I stopped for three months. Each effort ended in failure because I was still in denial. I thought that if I really put my mind to it, I was strong enough to stop. Each time I tried to stop I went back to drinking and it got worse. It was a terrible place to be. I believe that the first stage in my recovery was a deep-down honesty with myself, admitting that alcohol was controlling me and that there was nothing I could do about it on my own. I needed a power greater than alcohol and greater than me — and I found that power in Alcoholics Anonymous.

When I honestly admitted that alcohol was controlling me, I also admitted that my life was unmanageable. Because if alcohol is controlling my life,

then I am not, and so my life is, by definition, unmanageable. To me that's Step One.

I am on a journey, and my appreciation of the Twelve Steps is evolving as I grow in the program. I need that regular conscious contact with the Fellowship to keep me sober, one day at a time.

## **Living Sober as an Agnostic**

Before I came into the Fellowship, I thought A.A. was a Christian organization. I also thought it was very old-fashioned. I tried psychotherapy and it did nothing for me. I tried other kinds of counseling but they didn't work either. I was drinking to oblivion on a daily basis. A.A. for me was a last resort and proof of just how desperate I was.

The meetings seemed to be full of God — in the Twelve Steps, in the literature, in people's sharing — but I didn't care at the time because I felt I was in the right place. I was among alcoholics like myself, and they seemed to be all right. It was only when I began to feel better and started to consider these mysterious Steps that I wondered how on earth I was going to be able to do them without a belief in God. People in the Fellowship told me my higher power could be anything — a number 19 bus if I liked — but that was clearly daft.

I settled on the idea of the Fellowship itself as my higher power while trying to stay open to the possibility of developing a religious belief, because the literature indicated that, ultimately, I needed to believe in God if I was going to stay sober. The literature seems to say that it's OK to be an atheist or an agnostic, but if we want proper sobriety and a happy life, eventually we are going to need God in our lives.

I know today that isn't true, but at the time, I got a sponsor, went through the Steps with her, shared my Step Four with her and prayed with her. It felt hollow and untruthful, but I did it because I thought that was what I was supposed to do.

My lack of religious belief sometimes made me feel I was on the margins of A.A. rather than properly plugged in, but I went regularly to meetings and did service where I could. Gradually, A.A. worked for me despite my misgivings. I developed a conscience in A.A. and learned how to be honest with

myself and others. I learned the value of service and how to make friends in sobriety.

I haven't had a drink for 25 years, and I am no longer waiting for my religious conversion. I am still an agnostic. I don't know whether or not there is a supernatural power, but I don't believe that there is, and having a few years of sobriety behind me gives me the confidence to be open about my lack of belief.

I am aware that it's not so easy for others, and I am glad that there are a few atheist meetings now where newcomers can share freely. I do have a practice that some people would describe as spiritual, although I wouldn't call it that myself: I meditate every day and I think it helps keep me on an even keel, mentally and emotionally.

I was desperate to stop drinking and came to A.A. even though I hated the idea of it. And it got me sober. I trust that if I look into my own heart, clearly and with humility, and if I follow my instinct and my conscience, I will do the right thing and my life will be useful and meaningful. If I am not sure, other alcoholics whom I trust will be able to help me.

There is a place for atheists and agnostics in A.A. and a way through to a happy, sober life — and we should help each other to find it.

## **Neil's Story**

When I was a kid I was forced to go to Sunday school and church, although both my parents were very infrequent church attenders. When I was a teenager, one of the local ministers ran off with a parishioner's wife. His replacement threw my unmarried Sunday school teacher out of the school because she got pregnant. I found this all very hypocritical so I rejected God, rejected religion and rejected the church. In my late teens I read something in a magazine that said, "If you can believe in nothing else, believe in yourself." That article suddenly transformed me into Superman, and that was the way I lived for many years.

When I finally arrived in A.A., I was admitting for the first time that I wasn't able to run my own life and that I wasn't Superman. I read the Twelve Steps and I had no problem realizing there was a power greater than myself — vodka and coke. I made a decision to turn my will and my life over to

the care of Alcoholics Anonymous because you, a bunch of complete strangers, couldn't make a bigger mess of my life than I'd made myself.

After about three weeks in the Fellowship, I suddenly realized I hadn't had a single argument during those three weeks. For most of my life I'd been having at least one argument with at least one person every day. That's when I realized that I'd been living according to my own conscience even though I hadn't made a decision to do so. It felt so good that I made a decision there and then to live according to my conscience. That's the way I've lived for a number of years now and it still feels good.

Gradually, as time went on, I came to believe that there is something within me that guides me through life and looks after me. I don't know who or what it is, but I'm convinced there is "something." Sometimes I call it "God" simply because it's one syllable and it slips off the tongue easily. I still consider myself an agnostic, though.

The first three words of Step Two are "Came to believe." Those three words tell me that it is a gradual process. I haven't seen a big flash of light and been instantly transformed, but many little things have happened in my life to convince me that "something" exists. And that works for me.

## **Mikey's Story**

As an atheist, I have found over 15 years of rewarding growth in A.A., but the absence of agreement on religious issues has been a challenge.

Once I started to take A.A.'s suggestions, confusion gave way to clarity, and A.A.'s gifts of happiness, serenity and gratitude slowly made their way into my life.

But there was a difficulty for me in those early days. At meeting after meeting, I heard that if I expected lasting sobriety I'd have to somehow "come to believe" that a mystical force was in charge of my life, that I'd have to "turn my will" over to this supernatural force, and even seek to discover "his will for me."

I was horrified to think that such would be the price of sobriety for me — I would have to renounce my rational convictions. I was in despair.

Then I found a sponsor who showed me the ropes. He guided me through my First Step and

taught me that sobriety was possible for an alcoholic who was unable to pretend that reality was something it wasn't. In fact, he told me, honesty required *not pretending* about anything; and honesty, he told me, was a non-negotiable requirement for sobriety.

But, in order to be honest, I would have to examine myself carefully; I would have to embrace a power that would let me see myself for what I was. I would have to turn my life over to the power of reason if I were to be "restored to sanity." After all, the essence of my alcoholic insanity was a cognitive break with reality.

When I "turned my life over" to the higher power of reason, the insanity began to dissolve away.

I discovered that life can be driven by the principles of the Steps rather than by my impulses and urges. As I "turned my life over" to the principles of the Steps, my former alcoholic behaviors began to take a back seat.

My character defects and shortcomings were all tied up with the urges and impulses of my former alcoholic life. The more I aligned my life with the principles of the Steps, the more clearly I was able to see the world, and the less frequently I found myself at the mercy of urges and impulses, anger and resentments; of guilt from harm done to others; or of just plain fears. I was being set free!

It could never have happened drunk; it could never have happened without discovering the principles of the Steps.

It happened when the principles of the Steps were put into practice by a mind set free by the higher power of reason. It is a blessing for which I shall be forever grateful.

## **Sheila's Story**

I came into the Fellowship seven years ago as a self-proclaimed atheist. I had had many years working in a Church of England school so had become used to just ignoring the "God" bits. I did not join in with the prayers, etc. I was desperate for help and knew that I needed A.A., and thought that I would just carry on ignoring the "God" bits — starting the Serenity Prayer with the word "Grant," for instance.

As I became more involved in my own sobriety and the A.A. program, it became obvious that I could not ignore all this stuff indefinitely. I knew that I

would have to find a way that worked for me. I found the “chapter to the agnostic” and the relevant Steps in the “Twelve and Twelve” unhelpful, as it was not any specific concept of God that I rejected: It was the whole idea that there was anything in charge or had a purpose for me or “looked after me.”

Someone suggested that I use the Fellowship itself, as represented in the A.A. group, as a “higher power.” Steps Two and Three became simply a belief that maybe this program would work for me and then a willingness to follow suggestions and really give it a try. This worked for me.

Since then I have moved on to a deeper understanding. Most importantly, I know that I am not in control. I had no control over my drinking, and now I have no control over other people, places or things, or over what life will throw at me.

I did realize, however, that I had a faith all along — not in a magic man in the sky, but in the power of nature. If I cut my hand, the cut will heal all by itself as long as I keep it clean. My body has been busy healing, recovering from the damage caused by alcohol. I believe that this also applies to my psychological well-being. With the help of the human power of compassion and unconditional support I get from the members of this Fellowship and the tools of the Twelve Step program, I can give this healing process a chance. It is certainly a power greater than myself.

## **Dean’s Story**

When I came into A.A. I came in as a desperate, confused alcoholic who was also an atheist. As soon as I saw the word “God” in the Serenity Prayer card that was on the table, I thought, “Well that’s it, I don’t belong here. It’s a religious cult.”

The person who chaired that first meeting said not to worry too much about it and to keep coming to meetings and things will start to make sense in time. Because I was desperate to stop drinking, I did just that. I learned that it was a God of my own understanding and that A.A. was not about religion.

For the next four years, I didn’t do much but go to meetings and do a bit of service. In those four years I just got sicker, until one day I had a choice to make: kill myself or get a sponsor and work the Steps.

I got a sponsor and set out to work my way

through the Steps, only to fall at Step Two. I still didn't have a clue about the "God" word. My sponsor, who is a Christian, said he could not help me find my own God, and that it had to be my journey.

Because I didn't want anyone to accuse me of contempt prior to investigation, I set out looking at different religions. I soon learned enough to start on the subsequent Steps. I knew there might be something; I was not sure what, but there were enough sober people around me to show me something was working.

In all I spent about a year looking at religions and different spiritual beliefs. I went to church meetings, groups, meetings and get-togethers. Some looked very inviting; Buddhism and Taoism had a lot to offer and fitted in with the type of life I was trying to live. But there was always something that didn't sit well with me, and it was this that was blocking me from making any commitments to any of the religions or beliefs.

After all this, I thought that I had wasted my time. My A.A. friends and sponsor didn't agree with me and pointed out that I had spent a year finding out what God *wasn't* for me. After sitting and sleeping on this for a while it dawned on me: out of everything that I had seen and learned in the past year, *it was OK to be an atheist in A.A.*

My higher power is very much the love and wisdom I find in the rooms of A.A., and the beautiful things I see while walking in nature. I have no problem in using the word "God" with or without a capital G. My role now in A.A. is to carry the A.A. message to the still-suffering alcoholic, and that includes my journey in finding a God that works for me.

## **An Atheist in Recovery**

I stumbled into the Fellowship of A.A. because I could not stop drinking and I needed to get my life back on track.

The first thing I noticed was the "God" word. I knew this would be a problem for me. I thought A.A. was a cult and I would be brainwashed into becoming a religious fanatic, but I was desperate and didn't know where else to go. I felt safe in meetings and people were not judgmental. They seemed to have the same issues I did when it came to drinking.

I began to listen. I began to share. The "God" word

was and is still an issue. I am an atheist. I am also clean and sober and have been since that first day I walked into the rooms of A.A. over six years ago.

I kept coming to meetings. I made friends in A.A. Life started to get better. I noticed a change in my luck and circumstances. I told my sponsor it felt like I had a guardian angel. She asked if it could be my higher power — God, even. I said I preferred to think it was the power of the rooms and the support of the people in them.

All I know is that I could not have gotten sober on my own. I have a good life now. I work the Steps, I do service, I help newcomers, and I share my experience, strength and hope. In my experience I do not have to find God to stay sober.

This simple program works for me. I love the diversity in the rooms. We are all different. We are all unique. It's an inclusive club where, as stated in Tradition Three, "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking."

In the back of the Big Book under Appendix II – Spirituality, it states, "We find that no one need have difficulty with the spirituality of the program. *Willingness, honesty and open-mindedness are the essentials of recovery...*"

I owe my life to A.A. and the people in it. I came here to get sober, not to get religion. I no longer think the Fellowship is a cult. For me it is a lifesaver.

## **The "God" Word**

While I respect that many A.A. members believe in a God of their understanding, I cannot conceive of a supernatural being that resides in the sky, has human characteristics (especially those of the male gender), and organizes me and everyone else as if it were a master puppeteer. And yet I have no difficulty in accepting a power greater than myself, and that such an acceptance is vital to my continued recovery. I guess that makes me agnostic, but I don't like to be defined by labels, although I do use it when in the presence of someone who is struggling to find a power greater than themselves.

The power of the A.A. group is undoubtedly greater than myself, and involvement with this power is vital to my continued recovery: as Aristotle said, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." But in my daily life outside of meetings, and

indeed to practice the “God Steps,” I need a different conception of a power greater than myself. On page 55 of the Big Book, it says, “We found the great reality deep down within us.” Through the practice of daily meditation, I sense — beneath the mental chatter and the fleeting bodily feelings — a deep sense of calm and peace from which I draw strength to be able to deal with all that occurs in my daily life (“the power to carry it out,” as it says in Step Eleven). This I identify as my true nature, which is common to all of us. It is also, for me, the Great Reality that is referred to in the Big Book, that is beyond all concepts and labels, and that defies all attempts at description.

## **The universe is my higher power**

My name is Jon; I am an alcoholic. I am also an atheist.

I went into rehab many years ago and saw the Serenity Prayer written on a blackboard with the word “God” as big as the rest of the prayer. When I found the prayer was used at A.A. meetings, I immediately closed my eyes, ears and mind to everything to do with A.A. I went to dozens of meetings while in rehab and don’t remember a thing, not even the Twelve Steps.

When I came back to A.A. years later, I had friends who told me to use the rooms as my higher power (“group of drunks”) and to pray, even though I don’t believe in any religious deities. When it came to the Third Step Prayer though, I rebelled, mainly because of the “thys” and “thees.” How can a prayer published in 1939 use old English? It was a few years before I saw the sentence below the prayer that said I didn’t have to use these words. My close-mindedness again.

My sponsor asked me to record all of the happy coincidences in my life, especially those after I stopped drinking. He thought that would lead me to adopt a loving God, but to me they were just happy coincidences. My higher power did evolve, though. It wasn’t anything religious. It was an acceptance of myself as a small thing in a massive and magnificent universe. It serves me well.

I was able to work my way through the Steps with the universe as my higher power. I still “pray” but not to any religious deity. My “prayer” is a moment of calm I find when I can take stock of what-

ever issue is on my mind and stop thinking of it as the biggest problem that exists. In light of everything and everyone around me, my biggest problems aren't the most important thing in the universe, and neither am I.

Other sponsors and people I meet in the rooms sometimes try to lead me toward a religious higher power, but I am 100 percent content with what I have.

Like everyone else, I am indebted to Bill W. and Dr. Bob, but I am also grateful to the part that Jimmy B. played in the Big Book.

It is many years since my last drink. I am happy and contented. It's all down to the Fellowship.

## **Johnny's Story**

I am an alcoholic, and I am also an atheist, and it is to my own kind that I am writing: the atheist, the agnostic, the people who are still searching. As an atheist (and from present indications I shall probably be one until the day I die), I respect the right of others to find whatever kind of power they need to take the load off their own self-will, and I expect them to let me find my own way to do likewise.

For some of us, reaching an atheistic position is one of the few spiritually honest things we ever did. Our minds may be more open than many think. I attend numerous A.A. meetings, and one theme always stands out in my mind: many stories are about particular alcoholics who have found their places in life and, more important, in A.A., and in each case, there is a fight, a surrender and an acceptance.

If you are of an atheistic or strongly agnostic mindset like myself, chances are you'll walk into a meeting, see the Steps hanging on the wall and want to scream, laugh or walk back out. People tell me their stories — of God, the divine, the power of love, an intelligent Creator. I tell them I believe in mathematics. Some look at me in despair. And not infrequently, I've been asked, "So you think you're the most important thing in the universe?" In response I say, "On the contrary. I think I am among the smallest. Cosmically speaking, I barely exist." If you broke down all matter, you'd arrive at the same thing: what scientists call a quark. And I find that not only fascinating but wondrous, awe-inspiring and humbling. I believe that the most important

spiritual principle of A.A. is humility.

I tried A.A. years ago and after one meeting I went out, got drunk and stayed drunk for another year — a year filled with horror and degradation that made my other nine years of drinking seem like child's play. Having had my fill of people and life, and people and life having had their fill of me, I again turned to the last door that was open to me: A.A.

The first night back, I don't think I would have cared if God Himself had been the chairperson, I was staying, and I have stayed, and if the monkeys don't get too restless upstairs in my overactive mind —which I think of as my traveling circus — I will be staying every day, each and every 24 hours of them one at a time. I believe that there is a place in the world and in A.A. for people who do not have the capacity to believe, and that we are no more or no greater oddities than those people who do believe. After all, faith is not something that you can buy ready for sale at a supermarket. You either believe or you don't believe, and if you don't, stop worrying about it. You can still stay sober.

Is there a God or isn't there? I say it doesn't matter. In A.A. we recognize we are flawed, that we can and must change, and that our purpose not only in sobriety but in life is to be of service to others. I believe that I exist at random, but I do not exist alone, and that as long as my quarks cohere, my entire function on this hurtling planet is to give what I can to others.

That keeps me sober. Amen.

## **Where to find A.A.**

There are A.A. groups in large cities, small towns and rural areas throughout the world. Many A.A. intergroup or central offices have websites where information about local A.A. meetings can be found, and almost anywhere in the United States or Canada you will find a telephone number for A.A. These resources can help direct you to a meeting in your community. Additionally, information about local meetings can often be obtained from doctors and nurses, from the clergy, media outlets, police officials, hospitals and alcohol rehabilitation facilities that are familiar with our program.

Each A.A. group endeavors to provide a safe meeting place for all attendees and to encourage a secure and nurturing environment. In A.A., the shared experience, strength and hope of sober alcoholics is the lifeline to sobriety; our common suffering and our common solution transcend most difficulties, helping us to create the conditions in which to carry A.A.'s message of hope and recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic.

Most members feel quite comfortable in any A.A. group. Yet, many A.A. communities also have special interest meetings where it may be easier for atheists or agnostics to identify as alcoholics or to be open about certain personal issues or beliefs.

If you cannot locate an A.A. group in your area, please contact the A.A. General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163, (212) 870-3400, [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). They will put you in touch with the group nearest you.

## **A.A. literature and resources you may find helpful:**

Tradition Three, short and long forms

### **A.A. World Services Pamphlets:**

“A Newcomer Asks”

*(in particular, questions on A.A., religion and “God”)*

“Do You Think You’re Different?”

*(in particular, Ed’s story and Jan’s story)*

“Many Paths to Spirituality”

### **Books:**

*Alcoholics Anonymous* (the Big Book). In particular:

- Foreword to First Edition
- Foreword to Second Edition, p. xvi
- Chapter 2, “There is a Solution,” pp. 26-29
- Chapter 4, “We Agnostics,” pp. 44-57
- Story, “The Vicious Cycle”
- Appendix 11, “Spiritual Experience”

*One Big Tent: Atheist and agnostic members share their experience, strength and hope* (from AA Grapevine)

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, “Step Two”

*Living Sober*

*Came to Believe*

*As Bill Sees It*, selections on “Higher Power”

*‘Pass It On’*

*A.A. Comes of Age*, “Unity: The Second Legacy,” p. 81 and  
“Service: The Third Legacy,” pp. 166-167

## THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

**A.A. PUBLICATIONS** Below is a partial listing of A.A. publications. Complete order forms are available from the General Service Office of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Telephone: (212) 870-3400; Website: aa.org.

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**BOOKS**

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS  
DAILY REFLECTIONS  
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS COMES OF AGE  
AS BILL SEES IT  
DR. BOB AND THE GOOD OLDTIMERS  
'PASS IT ON'

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**BOOKLETS**

LIVING SOBER  
CAME TO BELIEVE  
A.A. IN PRISON: INMATE TO INMATE

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**PAMPHLETS**

**Experience, Strength and Hope:**

WOMEN IN A.A.  
A.A. FOR THE BLACK AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN ALCOHOLIC  
A.A. FOR THE NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND A.A.  
A.A. FOR THE OLDER ALCOHOLIC — NEVER TOO LATE  
LGBTQ ALCOHOLICS IN A.A.  
THE "GOD" WORD: AGNOSTIC AND ATHEIST MEMBERS IN A.A.  
A.A. FOR ALCOHOLICS WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES —  
AND THEIR SPONSORS  
ACCESS TO A.A.: MEMBERS SHARE ON OVERCOMING BARRIERS  
A.A. AND THE ARMED SERVICES  
DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DIFFERENT?  
MANY PATHS TO SPIRITUALITY  
MEMO TO AN INMATE  
IT SURE BEATS SITTING IN A CELL  
(An illustrated pamphlet for inmates)

**About A.A.:**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT A.A.  
IS A.A. FOR ME?  
IS A.A. FOR YOU?  
A NEWCOMER ASKS  
IS THERE AN ALCOHOLIC IN YOUR LIFE?  
THIS IS A.A.  
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON SPONSORSHIP  
THE A.A. GROUP  
PROBLEMS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL  
THE A.A. MEMBER—MEDICATIONS AND OTHER DRUGS  
SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX  
THE TWELVE STEPS ILLUSTRATED  
THE TWELVE TRADITIONS ILLUSTRATED  
THE TWELVE CONCEPTS ILLUSTRATED  
HOW A.A. MEMBERS COOPERATE WITH PROFESSIONALS  
A.A. IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES  
A.A. IN TREATMENT SETTINGS  
BRIDGING THE GAP  
A.A. TRADITION—HOW IT DEVELOPED  
LET'S BE FRIENDLY WITH OUR FRIENDS  
UNDERSTANDING ANONYMITY

**For Professionals:**

A.A. IN YOUR COMMUNITY  
A BRIEF GUIDE TO A.A.  
IF YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL  
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS AS A RESOURCE  
FOR THE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL  
A MESSAGE TO CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS  
IS THERE A PROBLEM DRINKER IN THE WORKPLACE?  
MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY ASK ABOUT A.A.  
A.A. MEMBERSHIP SURVEY  
A MEMBER'S-EYE VIEW OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**VIDEOS** (available on aa.org)

A.A. VIDEOS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE  
HOPE: ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
A NEW FREEDOM  
CARRYING THE MESSAGE BEHIND THESE WALLS

**For Professionals:**

A.A. VIDEO FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS  
A.A. VIDEO FOR LEGAL AND CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS  
A.A. VIDEO FOR EMPLOYMENT/HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS

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**PERIODICALS**

AA GRAPEVINE (monthly)  
LA VIÑA (bimonthly, in Spanish)

## A DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to A.A.'s future: To place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives and the lives of those to come.

I am responsible...

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

And for that: **I am responsible.**

This is A.A. General Service  
Conference-approved literature.

