

You Make A Start

You have made a decision. You've taken Step One and said to yourself, "Yes, I'm one of those people who is powerless over alcohol. My life has become unmanageable. I can't stop drinking and I want help." You have discovered, as it says in the Big Book, that alcohol is cunning, baffling, and powerful.

In order to stop drinking, and stay stopped, there are a few simple principles that you will need to apply to your life. These principles are A.A.'s program of recovery. They can work for you as effectively as they have worked for others. Following are some suggestions which we feel will be of help to you on your path to recovery.

Live One Day At A Time

Alcoholics Anonymous is "a one day at a time" way of living. We try to break life into small pieces we can handle. We stay sober one day at a time, or when necessary, one hour at a time. We do our jobs one task at a time. We solve our problems one problem at a time. We clean up our past, one mess at a time. And we conscientiously try to turn our lives and our will over to the care of the Higher Power, whom most of us come to depend upon for our recovery.

Go To Meetings

All over the Santa Clarita area, every day of the year, afternoons, mornings, and evenings, there is help in the form of meetings for you and for every alcoholic who wants help.

Get the printed directory of "A.A. Meetings in the Santa Clarita Valley Area," or scan the QR code to get the Meeting Guide App. Our website also lists meetings in the area. Every member should get the directory. Go

to as many meetings as you can. As one A.A. member says, "The Big Book is your road map, the meetings are your filling stations."

Get A Sponsor

A few members may tell you that they got sober without the aid of a sponsor, and they may be telling the truth. However, our A.A. program is based on sharing experience, and you'll do much better with a sponsor than without one. In A.A., having a good relationship with a sponsor is a vital part of your program of recovery.

Your sponsor will listen to you and share with you his or her experiences and should not try to mold you into their image. They will help you to steer clear of trouble spots and help you decide how best to work the steps to fit your needs. A sponsor helps you to understand what the A.A. program is and guides you through the steps of recovery.

Though sponsors can't solve all your problems, they can help you to face up to them with honesty and courage, and find ways to solve them by using the A.A. program.

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

Have A Home Group

When we are new, we are introduced to A.A. through a variety of meetings. After you've been to several other meetings, visit various groups and decide that you should settle down to a regular meeting, one that you will consider "your home group."

However, having a home group should not keep you from attending other meetings. Attend as many meetings as you feel the need for. And be as regular as you can in your attendance.

There are many different types of groups

available. Some are big groups. Others are small. There are more many discussion groups. When you have a home group, other group members may notice when you're struggling or absent. Some groups are well chaired and filled with people who want to help you. When you feel you have so many friends you can't afford to stay away!

Read The Books

As soon as you can, we suggest that you read these important books which explain the A.A. program of recovery, our history, and Traditions:

- The Big Book "Alcoholics Anonymous"
- "12 Steps And 12 Traditions"
- "AA Comes Of Age"
- "As Bill Sees It"
- "Dr. Bob And The Good Old-Timers"

These books are A.A. General Service Conference Approved literature. We suggest that you read them and reread them. They can be a constant source of inspiration and understanding. Many of us begin our "Quiet Times" by reading a paragraph or chapter from one of them. They are the basic source of our program of recovery.

Other A.A. literature is available and can be found at larger groups or the Central Office. We feel it can be helpful as you travel the Road to Happy Destiny.

There are also two excellent periodicals that most of us read. One is the AA Grapevine, which is published every month and is filled with helpful articles for the alcoholic who wants to get well and stay that way.

There is also a Santa Clarita Valley Area newsletter called the "Gratitude Gazette." This newsletter contains thoughtful articles from

members and information for the alcoholic in the Santa Clarita Area, as well as upcoming events scheduled in the surrounding areas. You can sign up at our website, aascv.org

Include The Family

It is said that the average practicing alcoholic affects the lives of at least five other people and that alcoholism is a family illness. We find that the family that gets sick together can often recover together. The best way to do this is to share your program of recovery with them.

Following are some of the A.A. activities you can share with your family.

Open Meetings: Take your partner or other members of your family, and interested friends to hear the stories of A.A. speakers, and to share in the fellowship of other A.A. families. Open meetings are listed in the Santa Clarita Valley meeting directory and in the Meeting Guide App.

Social Events: Special events, dances, picnics, and other social activities are regularly sponsored by groups for A.A. members and their families.

A.A. Conferences: Weekend conferences at resorts and hotels are held throughout the year and offer activities for A.A. members and their families. Often, Al-Anon and Alateen meetings are held at the same time.

The Al-Anon Family Groups (alanonla.org), designed for members of the alcoholic family, hold "open" and "closed" meetings just as A.A. groups do. They use A.A.'s twelve steps of recovery to help them understand the alcoholic and to adjust and improve their own lives.

Al-Anon membership is available to the partner of the alcoholic or other concerned persons. The Al-Anon Family Groups have their own organization, separate from A.A.

Ask Your Central Office

When you need help and can't reach your sponsor, call your Central Office. They will try to help or will find help for you.

If you need a Big Book, A.A. pamphlets, or the phone number of another group member, ask your secretary. Much like your sponsor, group secretaries will help you in every way they can. And if the secretary is unable to help or is not available, remember you can always call the Central Office: (661) 250-9922.

When You Travel or Moving

Just as you found friends in A.A. meetings everywhere in the Santa Clarita Valley, you will also find helpful A.A. members in almost every city and town in the United States and most parts of the world.

If you are moving or visiting another area and need to locate a new A.A. group, use the Meeting Guide app for meetings and locations.

Be A Part Of...

So now you've made a start. And if you are like most of us, we think you will find the suggestions helpful on your journey toward a happy sobriety.

Remember that you never have to be alone if you use Alcoholics Anonymous the way it is intended. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous was developed to provide support and guidance to all alcoholics who reach out for help. Our very survival requires that we just carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer. We need you. Join us, participate, and become a part of our program of recovery.

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Making a Start in Alcoholics Anonymous

A Guide for the Beginner



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