

Sharing Our Collective Experience: Let's Keep the Ideas Coming

Background

The A.A. Guidelines for Literature Committees indicate that, among other things, literature committees help inform our Fellowship about Conference approved literature and related service material. Opportunities to enrich such service can be found through sharing our collective knowledge with each other.

Workshop Topics

- Sharing Experience, Ideas, Inspiration, and Information Within our Committee
- Sharing Information and Strengthening Relationships Within the District
- Generating Interest in Literature; Creating Opportunities for Dialogue

I. Sharing Experience, Ideas, Inspiration and Information Within Our Area

What We Contribute:

Within our Area Literature Committee is an abundance of experience, ideas, inspiration, and information, and a passion for letting literature carry the message. From these attributes, members can contribute practical suggestions, thoughtful and insightful direction, and knowledge on a variety of subjects, some of which may be appropriate for the online repository that is being developed for the Area Literature Committee

Online repository: The repository will be located on the Area Literature page of the South Florida Area 15 website. There, workshop material, the A.A. Guidelines for Literature Committees and other appropriate information can be saved and accessed. Working together to contribute material to develop the repository will not only strengthen the area committee's unity, it will provide a hands-on resource tool for individual district Literature Committees, both current and future.

To get there: From the South Florida Area 15 website, select "Click Here for Navigation," Choose "Committees," and from the drop down menu select "Literature."

Where we come together to share our collective experience

- Area assembly Literature Committee meetings

- Email communications from our chairperson and secretary-treasurer
- Workshops at the Area 15 Literature Committee meeting at area assemblies
- Virtual meetings between Area 15 assemblies

II. Sharing information and strengthening relationships within the district

Here is District 2's experience. Our committee set some goals and commitments, and several projects, to help us share information and strengthen our relationships with GSRs, DCMs, group Literature Committee representatives, A.A. groups and individuals.

- Goals – Strive to be proactive: Listen, ask, participate, share information
- Commitment – Attend district GSR/DCM sharing sessions: At least one of our committee members attends these sessions. We want to reach out and develop relationships throughout the district and be available to assist whenever possible.
- Commitment – Have literature available for GSRs, group Literature Committee representatives, and A.A. groups to read; make it convenient
- Commitment – Provide periodic presentations
Example: Presentation on “How Can Literature Help You, Me, Us Carry the Message to Newcomers” given at the GSR/DCM sharing session

What we did:

Prior to the presentation --

- Obtained from the Literature Catalog the description of selected pamphlets of interest to newcomers and composed a list including the ID#, cost and description
- Prepared an insert on “Where to Find a Meeting” including the Meeting Guide App (<https://meetingguide.org/>) and websites for the local Central Office and Alcoholics Anonymous
- Assembled 10 sample packets, 8 English and 2 Spanish that included three pamphlets, a Where and When and the “Where to Find a Meeting” insert

At the Presentation --

- Gave a brief introduction on the importance of reaching our newcomers through literature

- Explained the pamphlets included in the welcome packet and additional literature that could be considered
- Provided to participants sample newcomer welcome packets, literature of Interest to newcomers, Where and When, Literature Committee flier
- Requested feedback

III. Generating interest in A.A. literature, creating opportunities for dialogue

Commitment – Have literature available for GSRs, group Literature Committee representatives and A.A. groups; make it convenient

Project 1: Literature Reading/Reference Library

The literature displayed at some meetings can be outdated and not as relevant as it could be to a particular group and members may not know what literature is available. The inspiration for the Literature Reading/Reference Library came from the A.A. Guidelines for Literature – Practical Suggestions on How to Make an Attractive Literature Display. One district chair reported having a suitcase with literature that he/she took out to different groups and asked for a minute or two to pitch what is available.

That idea was expanded to become a Literature Reading/Reference Library in District 2. It is convenient and can be used in several ways:

- Be made available for presentations given to GSRs, group Literature Committee representatives and at A.A. group business meetings. It might be particularly useful in a presentation regarding the three types of literature – Recovery, Unity, Service.
- Displayed at district events to allow people to browse and take a closer look at the pamphlets and to provide opportunities to start a dialogue about literature.

What we did:

- Used an existing master inventory list delineating most pamphlets, their names, IDs, and stock on hand, categorized as Recovery, Unity and Service
- Assembled literature for the categories Recovery, Unity and Service
- Prepared a Reading/Reference Library List, including pamphlet ID number, title and description copied from A.A.W.S. online bookstore for each pamphlet
- Affixed a label on each pamphlet with color-coded ID number

Project 2: International Big Book Language Game

The objective is to bring people to the literature table. Make it interesting and interactive. In the A. A. Guidelines under “Practical Suggestions on How to Make an Attractive Display” was a suggestion to make a banner of color Xeroxes of the book covers of the foreign editions of the Big Book and hang it above the literature display. This idea was repurposed by our Committee.

What we did:

- Took snapshots of foreign Big Book covers from A.A.W.S Online Book Store – International Books <https://b2c.aaws.org/c-30-international-big-books.aspx> and printed 4 x 6 copies
- Prepared language “game pieces”
- For the medium, used a magnetic board, magnetic strips and magnets to secure the language pieces.
- Invited attendees to participate with a sign reading “The Big Book is published in 71 different languages. Match the Big Book cover to the correct language.”

FOR G.S.R.’s / HOME GROUPS / LITERATURE REPRESENTATIVES

LITERATURE OF INTEREST TO NEWCOMERS TO A.A.

- This is A.A.

Introductory pamphlet describing the kind of people A.A.’s are and what A.A.’s have learned about alcoholism. For anyone who thinks he or she may have a drinking problem.

- Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.

Answers questions most frequently asked about A.A. by alcoholics seeking help, as well as their family and friends.

- Is A.A. for You?

Symptoms of alcoholism are summed in 12 questions most A.A.’s had to answer to identify themselves as alcoholics.

- Do You Think Your Different

Speaks to newcomers who consider themselves to be “different” and who wonder how A.A. can work for them. Nine members share their stories.

- Questions & Answers on Sponsorship

Uses shared experience to answer 34 questions likely to be asked by persons seeking sponsors, persons wanting to be sponsors, and groups planning sponsorship activity.

- **A Newcomer Asks**

Gives straightforward brief answers on 15 points that once puzzled many of us.

- **Is A.A. for Me?**

Based on the 12 questions in "Is A.A. for you?" this 32 page pamphlet is an illustrated, easy-to-read version.

- **The Twelve Steps Illustrated**

An easy-to-read version of A.A.'s Twelve Steps. Step appears at top of each page with simplified text under illustration.

- **Alcoholics Anonymous (Soft Cover)**

Fourth edition (2001) of the Big Book, basic text of A.A. Since the first edition appeared, in 1939, it has helped millions of men and women recover from alcoholism. Chapters describing the A.A. recovery program remain unchanged. New stories have been added to the personal histories. Portable, softcover, unabridged Fourth Edition, 4 1/2"x7".

- **Came to Believe**

A 120-page collection of stories by A.A. members who write about what the phrase "spiritual awakening" means to them.

- **Living Sober**

This practical 90-page booklet demonstrates through simple example how A.A. members throughout the world live and stay sober one day at a time.

LITERATURE READING /REFERENCE LIBRARY LIST

RECOVERY

P-1 This is A.A. An Introduction to the Recovery Program

Introductory pamphlet describing the kind of people A.A.'s are and what A.A.'s have learned about alcoholism. For

anyone who thinks he or she may have a drinking problem.

P-2 Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.

Answers the questions most frequently asked about A.A. by alcoholics seeking help, as well as by their families and friends.

P-3 Is A.A. for You? Twelve Questions Only You Can Answer

Symptoms of alcoholism are summed up in 12 questions most A.A.'s had to answer to identify themselves as alcoholics.

P-4 Young People and A.A.

Nineteen young A.A.s - 13 to 25 tell how the program works for them.

P-5 Women in A.A.

Relates the experiences of alcoholic women of all ages and from all walks of life.

P-9 Memo to an Inmate Who May be an Alcoholic

A message from A.A.s who have themselves been inmates. Their personal stories offer a new outlook to inmate alcoholics who want to know how A.A. can help.

P-10 How it Works

An excerpt in large type from Chapter 5 of the Big Book. This page, which includes the Twelve Steps, is often read at the start of meetings.

P-11 The A.A. Member – Medications & Other Drugs

A.A. members share their experience with medications and other drugs. Report from a group of doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous.

P-12 Jack Alexander Article about A.A.

Published in 1941, this marks a highlight in A.A. history. It sparked the first great surge of interest in A.A.

P-13 Do you Think You're Different?

Speaks to newcomers who consider themselves to be "different" and who wonder how A.A. can work for them. Nine members share their stories.

P-15 Questions & Answers on Sponsorship

Uses shared A.A. experience to answer 34 questions likely to be asked by persons seeking sponsors, persons wanting to be sponsors, and groups planning sponsorship activity.

P-21 A.A. for the Native North American

Addressed to Native American A.A. members; also contains some of their stories.

P-22 A.A. for the Older Alcoholic

A revision of "Time to Start Living," relates the stories of eight men and women who came to A.A. after 60. Large-print.

P-24 A Newcomer Asks

Gives straightforward brief answers on 15 points that once puzzled many of us.

P-30 Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life

Explains the A.A. program as it affects anyone close to an alcoholic, spouse, family member or friends.

P-32 LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.

Excerpts from the experience, strength, and hope of sober gay and lesbian alcoholics point out that the tie that binds us all together is freedom from alcohol.

P-33 It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell

An illustrated pamphlet that presents the experience of seven inmates who found

A.A. while in prison. It also offers suggested dos and don'ts for staying sober after release. Glued at the spine for distribution in correctional facilities.

P-35 Problems Other Than Alcohol

Bill's thoughts on the status of drug addicts within A.A. are as timely as when they appeared in a 1958 Grapevine.

P-36 Is A.A. for Me

Based on the 12 questions in "Is A.A. for You?" this 32-page pamphlet is an illustrated easy-to-read version.

P-37 Too Young

With a full-color cover, this cartoon pamphlet speaks directly to teenagers telling the varied drinking stories of six young people (13 to 18) and showing their welcome to A.A.

P-38 What Happened to Jose

Dramatic story of a young construction worker and his drinking problem, told in brightly colored "comic book" style.

P-39 It Happened to Alice

Easy-to-read "comic book" style pamphlet for women alcoholics.

P-42 A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous

Originally designed for use in schools, this folder also lends itself to other P.I. purposes. In simple language, it describes our program and offers general information on A.A.

P-50 A.A. and the Armed Services

Personal stories tell how men or women in the military - any rank, any age - can beat a drinking problem through A.A.

P-51 A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic

Personal stories of finding sobriety and a new way of life in Alcoholics

Anonymous. An easy-to-read version of A.A.'s Twelve Steps. Step appears at top of each page with simplified text under illustration.

P-56 This is A.A.

Large print version

P-57 Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.

Large print version

P-83 Access to A.A. Members/Sharing on Overcoming Barriers

Previously "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs"

This pamphlet includes the experience of A.A. members who are hearing and visually impaired, housebound, chronically ill or disabled due to brain damage or

stroke. Their stories tell how they found A.A. and are living new and productive lives free from alcohol.

P-84 Many Paths to Spirituality

Addresses the misconception that A.A. is a religious program by sharing various spiritual paths to sobriety.

P-86 The “God” Word -- Agnostic and Atheist Members in A.A.

Experience, strength and hope shared by agnostic and atheist members of A.A., highlighting that there is room in the Fellowship for people of all shades of belief and non-belief.

P-87 A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues – And Their Sponsors

This pamphlet contains the experiences of 12 women and men, all of whom are alcoholics coping with serious mental health issues, who have found sobriety and a new way of life in Alcoholics Anonymous. Also included are the perspectives of five A.A. members with long-term sobriety who have worked closely as sponsors with alcoholics who have mental health issues, helping them to gain and maintain sobriety in A.A.

UNITY

P-8 The Twelve Concepts of World Service

Brief, easy-to-read text and clever illustrations make the Twelve Concepts for World Service clear and understandable.

P-17 A.A. Tradition How it Developed by Bill W.

Bill W.'s 1946-1947 Grapevine articles on the Traditions trace the evolution of principles for A.A. unity and growth

In this Grapevine reprint, Bill explains the importance of cooperating with doctors, social workers, etc.

P-43 The Twelve Traditions Illustrated

Based on a Grapevine series; presents both the spirit and the practical application of our Traditions.

P-45 Circles of Love and Service

This leaflet outlines our service structure in full-color diagrams.

P-47 Understanding Anonymity

Explains what anonymity means, both within and outside A.A.

P-48 2018 Membership Survey

Summarizes the latest survey of membership in the U.S. and Canada: who A.A.s are (age, sex, occupation, length of sobriety) and how they got to A.A.

P-56 This is A.A.

Large print version

P-57 Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.

Large print version

P-83 Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers

P-28 8 1/2" x 11" Flyer of Twelve Traditions

P-34 Let's Be Friendly with Our Friends

What A.A. can offer to the alcoholic employee. (Formerly "Alcoholics Anonymous and Employee Assistance Programs")

P-55 The Twelve Steps Illustrated

An easy-to-read version of A.A.'s Twelve Steps. Step appears at top of each page with simplified text under illustration.

SERVICE

P-16 The A.A. Group

Informal guide tells how a group works most effectively, how a new group can be started and how each group can be linked to A.A. as a whole.

P-18 Inside A.A.: Understanding the Fellowship and its Service Agencies

Explains the A.A. service structure in the U.S. and Canada, describing all elements linking member and group with the General Service Conference.

P-19 G.S.R.: General Service Representative

Explains the A.A. service structure in the U.S. and Canada, describing all elements linking member and group with the General Service Conference.

P-20 A Message to Correctional Professionals

Information about what A.A. is and can do and how groups function in a correctional facility.

P-23 A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional

Gives information about the Fellowship and describes some approaches that health care professionals use in referring problem drinkers to A.A. (Revision of "A.A. as a Resource for the Medical Profession")

P-25 Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous

Introduction to A.A. for members of the clergy unfamiliar with the Fellowship; further discussion for those seeking greater understanding of its program.

P-26 A.A. in Correctional Facilities

Experience based on the functioning of A.A. groups in prisons, with institutional opinions recommending A.A. as a helpful ally.

P-27 A.A. in Treatment Facilities

Shares experience of treatment facility administrators and of A.A.s who have carried the message into these facilities.

P-29 How A.A. Members Cooperate with Professionals

Answers specific queries on working within A.A. Traditions.

P-31 Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community

Six-page folder explains how A.A. is geared to work in any community to help alcoholics. Prepared to help groups, central offices, and Public Information committees interpret A.A. to the community.

P-40 Speaking at Non-AA Meetings

For A.A.s asked to speak to organizations outside the fellowship about A.A., alcoholism, and the alcoholic, this pamphlet suggests what to say and how to say it.

P-41 A Member's Eye View of Alcoholics Anonymous

Explains the A.A. program to social workers, counselors, physicians, and others in the alcoholism field. It also provides fresh insight into A.A. for all members.

Directed at professionals of all types who deal with alcoholics; explains how A.A.s and non-A.A.s can work together.

P-44 A.A.'s Legacy of Service

In this foreword to the A.A. Service Manual, Bill W. describes the beginnings of group and general services, the origin of the Traditions, and the birth of the Conference.

P-46 If You are a Professional A.A. Wants to Work with You

Directed at professionals of all types who deal with alcoholics; explains how A.A.s and on-A.A.s can work together.

P-49 Bridging the Gap Between Treatment and Though Temporary Contact Programs

An eight-page pamphlet for A.A.s who carry the message into treatment facilities.

P-52 The A.A. Grapevine and LaVina – Our Meetings in Print Provides basic information on the Grapevine magazine.

P-53 The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous

Brief biographical sketches of Bill W. and Dr. Bob, together with their last major talks.

P-54 Is There a Problem Drinker in the Workplace?

Of interest to management and union officials, this leaflet gives a concise description of the help A.A can offer to the alcoholic employee.

(Formerly "Alcoholics Anonymous and Employee Assistance Programs")

RELATED MATERIAL

F-1 A.A. at a Glance

Flyer condensing facts on the fellowship.

F-2 Information on Alcoholics Anonymous

Sheet for P.I./C.P.C. use.

F-3 Self Support – Where Money and Spirituality Mix

F-4 Where Do I Go from Here For people leaving treatment facilities, single-sheet flyer tells of continuing help offered by “outside” A.A.s.

F-5 Carrying the Message into Correctional Facilities

F-8 Problems Other than Alcohol (excerpts) Bill’s Thoughts on the status of drug addicts within A.A. are a timely as when

they appeared in 1956 Grapevine (excerpts)

F-9 A Message to Teenagers

F-10 Literature Catalog

F-12 Your District Committee Member

F-17 Primary Purpose Card

F-19 Self Support Packet [Includes F3 – Where Money and Spirituality Mix, F-42

Self-Support Card, F-96 The A.A. Group

Treasurer, MG-15 A.A. Guidelines on Finance, FR-2 Birthday Contribution

Envelopes, F-203 7th Tradition Fact Sheet]

F-33 Service Material List (Visit the [A.A. website](#) for more information)

F-20 A.A. Anonymity Card (announcement for reading at meeting open to the public)

F-47 The A.A. Archives

F-96 The A.A. Group Treasurer

F-211 Safety Card for A.A Groups

F-192 They Needed a Book

M-1 Guide for Leading Beginners Meetings. Includes eight-page service pamphlet of suggestions - plus 12 Conference-approved pamphlets and more.