

AA Values and Christianity

The AA program is made up of spiritual principles familiar to every Christian, like turn the other cheek, forgive and love one another. These age-old principles have been codified in the Christian religion for over 2,000 years and can be found in the book of James. In 1935, AA developed out of the soil of the Oxford Group, an international Christian organization. Prior to this Twelve Step approach alcoholics did not consistently get sober and stay sober. Tarrying at the wine too long was one of the few problems Solomon was not wise enough to solve.

If the principles are the same, what is different? The change is in how the message is delivered. When Bill Wilson met Dr. Bob Smith, the co-founders of AA discovered one alcoholic talking to another alcoholic can communicate in a way the alcoholic can hear and receive. Although the alcoholic's "receiver is broken," somehow another alcoholic can connect through the brokenness, when professionals and family members may not be able to connect.



A new day dawns for problem drinkers and their families.

How to Refer

God writes straight with crooked pencils

Once parishioner accepts that drinking is a problem, suggest:

1. Members of Alcoholics Anonymous are helped by telling others about their own drinking history
2. Would you be willing to listen to a recovered alcoholic share their miracle of recovery?
3. If yes, do you grant permission to give your first name and number to the AA member?

If parishioner does not want to stop drinking:

- Perhaps he/she does not really believe that drinking is a problem.
- Suggest he/she try some controlled drinking, like 2 drinks per night for 30 days in a row, without wanting to drink more.
- Ask parishioner to report results to you.

DuPage Alcoholics Anonymous

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This brochure is not AA General Service Conference approved literature.

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DuPage Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Clergy Outreach Series

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reports 1 person out of 12 in the US population is estimated to be alcoholic; more than 1 out of 2 adults have a close family member who has abused alcohol or is addicted.

Christian Pastoral Care



A new day dawns for problem drinkers

A Resource for Education

- AA Values & Christianity
- What AA is and is not

A Resource for Referral

- Some options on how to uncover, respond, and refer

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www.aa.org

www.dupageaa.org

What AA 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 AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA 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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According to the AA General Service Office in New York, NY, there are over 2,000,000 members in more than 104,000 groups in over 180 countries.

What AA Is Not

AA does not keep membership records or support research. AA does not provide drying-out or nursing services, welfare or social services, or offer religious services. AA does not provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money, domestic counseling, or letters of reference.

Probing Questions to Uncover

- ♦ **Have you ever wondered if you are a normal drinker?**
- ♦ **Have you ever promised yourself you would stop drinking?**
- ♦ **Has anyone ever suggested that you may have a drinking problem?**
- ♦ **Have you ever changed from one kind of drink to another to prevent getting drunk?**
- ♦ **Have you ever had an eye-opener?**
- ♦ **Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?**
- ♦ **Have you ever had problems made worse because of your drinking?**
- ♦ **Has your drinking caused trouble at home?**
- ♦ **Do you ever want more after two drinks?**
- ♦ **Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking at any time?**
- ♦ **Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking?**
- ♦ **Do you ever forget what you did or said while drinking?**
- ♦ **Have you ever surrendered your car keys because of drinking?**
- ♦ **Have you ever felt your life would be better if you did not drink?**
- ♦ **Did you grow up in an alcoholic home?**
- ♦ **Have you had problems with the law as a result of drinking too much alcohol of any type? DUI?**

How to Respond

Your objective: lead parishioner to realize drinking is a problem by exploring how the yes answers to the probing questions relate to the issues that led to the pastoral appointment.

- **Keep probing to discover the connections for yourself**
- **Lead your parishioner to similar insight about the connections**
- **Is it possible that drinking is a problem for your parishioner?**

Additional resources for pastors:

- **Attend several open AA meetings to learn how drinking manifests in life problems. Meeting schedule at www.dupageaa.org.**

Note: Open AA meetings are for anyone. Closed AA meetings are for those who may have a drinking problem.

- **Visit www.aa.org, click on Information, click on Professionals and look for the brochure addressed to the Clergy.**
- **Remember, alcoholism is a family disease. Suggest spouses and children visit Al-Anon Family Groups at www.niafg.org or call (630) 627-4441 for more information.**