

MEETING LEADER GUIDE

Before the meeting starts handout The Opening Prayer, Chapter 3 or 5, The Twelve Traditions, the Promises

Welcome to the _____ Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.

My name is _____ and I'm an alcoholic.

Preamble: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is the 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 others achieve sobriety."

I have asked a volunteer to read the **Opening Prayer**.

I have asked a volunteer to read **Chapter 3** (or Chapter 5) from the Big Book.

I have asked a volunteer to read the **Twelve Traditions**.

A **newcomer** is defined as anyone who has less than 30 days of continuous sobriety. So that we can get to know you, will the newcomers please introduce themselves?

Are there any **visitors** from outside the area?

We give out **chips** for varying lengths of sobriety and celebrate sobriety birthdays. Will our chip person please hand out the chips?

Secretary Announcements: I'm going to turn the meeting over now to the Secretary for the 7th tradition and announcements.

Leader identifies for 10 minutes. (What it was like, what happened, what it is like now.)

The meeting is now open for **sharing**. Birthday people first.

End the meeting at 5 minutes before the end of the meeting. "That is all the time we have today, I've asked someone to please read the **Promises**."

After a moment of silence for the alcoholic who still suffers will _____ please **lead us out in a prayer** of your choice.

Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous Leader Guide

Leader hands out the readings.

Welcome to the _____ (meeting name) meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are so glad you are here. My name is _____, and I am an alcoholic.

The meeting would appreciate it if you turn off your cell phone.

Preamble: “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. 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.”

I have asked _____ to read the **Opening Prayer**.

I have asked _____ to read a portion of **Chapter 5** taken from the Big Book.

I have asked _____ to read **The Twelve Traditions**.

A **Newcomer** is defined as “anyone who has had a drink in the last 30 days”. So that we may get to know you better, would the Newcomers please introduce themselves?

Starting on my left, let’s go around the room and **introduce ourselves**.

We give out **chips** at this meeting and celebrate birthdays with cake at the end of the month. At this time will the chip person please hand out chips?

The Seventh Tradition states that we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We will be passing the Seventh Tradition basket during the meeting. Please place any attendance cards in the basket.

This is a **Topic Meeting of AA** where we focus on the AA program solution. **Please stay on the topic** chosen by the leader. (Leader will pick topic from list and share for 5 minutes)

LEADER OPENS THE MEETING: The meeting is open, please limit your sharing on the topic to 3-5 minutes so that many can share.

10 minutes before the Meeting Ending Time: Close the sharing. Turn meeting over to the secretary for reports and announcements.

I have asked _____ to read either **“The Promises” or “A Vision for You”**

After a moment of silence for the alcoholic who still suffers, will _____ please lead us out in a **prayer** of their choice.

Opening Prayer

Our Father, We come to you as a friend.

**You have said where two or more are gathered,
there you will be in the midst.**

**We believe you are here with us now and this is something you would
have us do, and that it has your blessing.**

**We pledge with you to be honest and to search our hearts for
weaknesses and errors, that we may deserve your help.**

**We believe that you want us to be real partners with you in this
business of living, accepting our full responsibilities, and certain that the
rewards will be freedom, growth and happiness. For this we are grateful.**

**We ask you at all times to guide us. Help us daily to come closer to
you. Grant us new ways of living and of gratitude.**

Please join me in the Serenity Prayer.

**God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the
courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.**

Amen.

Preamble of Alcoholics Anonymous

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.

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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Chapter 5 - How It Works

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average.

There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it -- then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with alcohol, cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power that One is God. May you find Him now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. we asked His protection and care with complete abandon.

Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

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.

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventure before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- a. That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- b. That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- c. That God could and would if He were sought.

The 12 Traditions

- 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.**

The Promises

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not.

They are being fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.

They will always materialize *if* we work for them.

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

A.A. "Cloud 9"

Acceptance

Alcoholic's sensitivity

Am I really an alcoholic?

Anonymity

Attitude

Depressions - how to get out of them

Difference between shortcomings and defects of character

Discussions on periodic drinking and trying to drink like normal

Early problems on program

Facing problems without alcohol

Gratitude - what it means to me?

Guilt feelings

Humility - Anger - Surrender

Letting go

Liquor in the home

Necessity for meetings

Peace at any price

Perfectionism

Resentments

Self-centeredness

Spiritual awakening

Sponsorship - What is a sponsor and what does a sponsor do?

Stories for newcomers and newcomer problems

The slogans of A.A. and how to use them

Third Step - Turning your will over

Thoughts on taking a personal inventory

Twelve stepping

Wanting a drink after many years; how to handle it?

What causes slips?

What is meant by "this is a program of rigorous honesty?"

What it means to be active in A.A.?

What serenity means to me?

Working the program

**SUGGESTED INTRODUCTORY WELCOME
REMARKS AT OPEN A.A.MEETINGS**

We welcome those attending their first meeting here and we would like to read a brief statement of policy.

As we know, many people are coming to A.A. today with a dual addiction, to alcohol and other drugs. These newcomers are truly welcome here as members of our fellowship, provided their primary addiction is to alcohol, something they alone can honestly determine.

We ask only that when discussing their problems, they confine themselves to those related to their alcoholism.

We also welcome those people whose primary addiction is to other than alcohol. We are certainly sympathetic to your problem, but we ask you not to participate in our discussions lest our A.A. meeting be diverted from our primary purpose.

We also suggest you make contact, if you have not already done so, with other anonymous organizations. Our local Central Office has phone numbers for many of these.

In any case, we sincerely hope what you learn here may be helpful to you in your recovery.

Finally, it is well for all of us to remember at all times the words of Bill W., one of the co-founders of A.A.: "Sobriety - freedom from alcohol- is the sole purpose of any Alcoholics Anonymous Group."

LOS ANGELES CENTRAL SERVICE COMMITTEE 1985

