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Alcoholics Anonymous is a Fellowship of men and women sharing their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. AA is non denominational and opens its door to all. A.A. has a simple program that works. It's based on one alcoholic helping another. Make plans to attend the 2025 A.A. International Convention in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, July 3-6. Taking place once every five years, the A.A. International Convention marks the anniversary of Bill W.'s first meeting with Dr. Bob and the birth of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935. A.A. members and their families and friends from around the globe attend the event. At the International Convention people attend meetings, workshops, dances and events. A highlight is the traditional flag ceremony to celebrate sobriety worldwide. No Reflection on this day. No Reflection on this day. Anyone with a desire to stop drinking is welcome, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, income or profession. And it's free. You can just sit and listen and learn more about recovery, or you can share about your situation. It's completely up to you. People drink alcohol for many different reasons. Some people drink alcohol more than others, and those who consume many alcoholic drinks regularly can develop alcohol use disorder. Here are some of the most common reasons why people drink alcohol: Some people consider themselves social drinkers, as they consume alcohol in various social situations, like: Happy hours Birthday parties Holidays Weddings A social drinker might enjoy a glass of wine during an evening out with friends or during another social activity. This form of drinking typically doesn't disrupt their lives or cause any personal or major health problems long-term. Your peers may pressure you to engage in activities that you might not do on your own, like drinking alcohol. You can sometimes end up drinking too much due to peer pressure. Young people, like high school and college students, are especially susceptible to peer pressure. Sometimes, young people begin drinking alcohol to "fit in." Like all addictions, alcoholism affects the reward center of the brain. However, the effects of alcohol are long-lasting and can take a toll on your mental health. Unfortunately, heavy drinkers can pass down these side effects from one generation to the next. If your family has a history of alcohol addiction, you may have a genetic predisposition to develop the same addiction. Alcohol is a depressant, which means it slows down the central nervous system (CNS). Depressants can induce feelings of relaxation. This is why some people turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism to escape problems or deal with: Work or school-related problems Social issues Legal troubles Mental health issues Alcohol can provide a mental escape from unpleasant emotions or symptoms caused by mental health conditions like anxiety or depression. This is why some people may abuse alcohol to "self-medicate." However, people with mental health issues can experience extreme effects from substance use. This could lead to co-occurring disorders like bipolar, anxiety, and depression. Positive and fun past experiences with alcohol may make someone drink again. On the other hand, a negative experience while drinking may have the opposite effect. Enjoying drinking in the past may motivate you to drink. The environment a person is in may make drinking more appealing. When alcohol is advertised on television, glorified in the media, or normalized by family members, it can become a habit. These include: Early exposure to alcohol Stressful or violent environments Poverty Many people drink alcohol because it is incredibly accessible. It is also a widely accepted activity. The accessibility and acceptability of alcohol can make it easier to indulge in it. Drinking alcohol makes many people feel happy, social, and relaxed. Alcohol often enhances people's experiences at events or in social gatherings. However, drinking too much can often make you engage in risky behavior and poor decision-making. Young people, like teenagers, often want to rebel against their parents or the rules. One way to defy the rules placed upon them can be by drinking alcohol. Alcohol use is common in young people due to their adolescence and interest in experimenting with adult activities. Additionally, if they have parents or guardians who tend to abuse alcohol, this behavior can rub off on them. Binge drinking is the most common, expensive, and lethal pattern of excessive alcohol use across the country. Binge drinking can elevate a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 g/dl or higher. This typically happens after five or more drinks for men or four or more for women in about 2 hours or less. Binge drinking may or may not lead to more serious alcohol problems, such as alcoholism. The American Psychiatric Association (APA) doesn't identify binge drinking as a formal disorder. However, it is a behavior that can be a risk factor for formal disorders and is still dangerous. People who binge drink are more accident-prone, are at a higher risk of making poor decisions, and are more likely to lose emotional control. People binge drink for many of the same reasons people drink in general: Social environments Peer pressure Family history of alcoholism Stress Mental health disorders Rebellion Over 3 million people use BetterHelp. Their services are: Professional and effective Affordable and convenient Personalized and discreet Easy to start Find a Therapist Answer a few questions to get started Underage drinking is defined as anyone who drinks below the legal age limit, which is 21 years old in the United States. Unfortunately, it's quite common. The 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health reported that nearly 17% of teens aged 16 to 17 have consumed alcohol. Similarly, that number jumps to 32% in 18 to 20-year-olds.9 Warning signs of underage drinking include: Mood swings and irritability Low energy levels Decreased interest in certain activities Decreased care about appearance Changing friends Academic problems in school Behavioral problems (in and outside of school) Rebelliousness Issues concentrating Memory problems Slurred speech Finding or smelling alcohol on their things Many of these warning signs also correlate with typical characteristics of adolescence. Consult a doctor if these symptoms seem abnormal or last for a long period of time. Drinking moderate amounts of alcohol on occasion is not harmful to most people. But drinking frequently or heavily can lead to health issues and/or alcoholism. Casual drinking can turn into binge drinking, which can lead to alcohol abuse, which can lead to alcoholism. Alcohol can harm your health and impair your ability to make sound decisions. The following potential consequences can affect you long-term: High blood pressure Heart disease Stroke Liver disease Digestive problems Cancer of the breast, mouth, throat, esophagus, liver and colon Weakened immune system Learning and memory problems Mental health problems (i.e., depression or anxiety) Social problems (i.e., family issues or unemployment) Alcohol use disorders (i.e., alcoholism) Accidents, such as automobile crashes DUI/DWI citations Arrests for public intoxication Physical fights and/or other aggressive behaviors The more someone drinks, the more dangerous behavior they will engage in. Drug use and abuse are more common among people with heavy drinking habits.10 They'll connect you to an addiction and mental health counselor Find a Therapist Answer a few questions to get started Alcoholism can cause someone to experience withdrawal when they're not drinking, which makes it even harder to quit. An estimated 15 million people cope with alcoholism in the United States.11 These people likely experience dependency-induced consequences. Alcoholism can have consequences that take a serious toll on your: Physical health Mental health Social life Career or school life Excessive, long-term alcohol use affects your brain chemistry. When you stop drinking, the brain is unable to function correctly. This leads to withdrawal. Alcohol withdrawal syndrome (AWS) is a condition that occurs within hours or a few days after the brain stops receiving alcohol. The symptoms of alcohol withdrawal can have uncomfortable mental and physical side effects, which vary from person to person. Symptoms include: Anxiety Depression Mood swings (agitation or irritability) Headaches Nausea and vomiting Abdominal cramping Insomnia Mild tremors or shakes Loss of appetite Cognitive issues (confusion or thinking problems) Fatigue Heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat High blood pressure Breathing problems Fever and sweating Tactile, auditory, or visual hallucinations Seizures Delirium tremens (DTs) Alcohol withdrawal can be dangerous, especially with seizures or delirium tremens. If you or someone you know is experiencing alcohol withdrawal, seek immediate medical attention. BetterHelp offers affordable mental health care via phone, video, or live-chat. Find a Therapist Answer a few questions to get started There are many different options to consider when addressing a substance abuse disorder. Five treatment options include: In behavioral therapy, health professionals help people identify the behaviors that lead them to drink heavily. They also help them develop the skills to stop drinking, detox, build a strong support system, and cope with triggers. Biofeedback therapy (or neurofeedback therapy) uses an electroencephalograph (EEG) to train the brain to function more efficiently. An EEG listens to a patient's brainwave activity to help them identify triggers and stress-induced psychological responses. Holistic therapy combines many therapies that focus on a person's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Family members like spouses and siblings can play a significant role in the treatment process. Family therapy incorporates family members in therapy sessions. A loved one can help monitor an alcohol user's consumption of alcoholic beverages. Loved ones can play a huge part in helping an alcoholic through all stages of recovery. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is arguably the most popular and well-known support group for addiction treatment. AA offers anyone with an alcohol problem accountability meetings and discussion groups about addiction. AA uses a 12-Step program to help members overcome alcohol addictions, which they can revisit whenever they need. Alcohol is a common staple of adult life. It's often used in celebrations, gatherings, and other social occasions. There are various reasons why people start drinking alcohol, young adults are especially susceptible to drinking. However, not all of them are good reasons, these include self-medication, addiction, and peer pressure. Excessive alcohol use can quickly lead to addiction and dependence, which can cause long-term physical and mental health complications. If you struggle with abstaining from alcohol consider seeking treatment. Updated on September 14, 2023 Step 5 prayer Fear of confession Step 5 of Alcoholics Anonymous involves openly admitting to others the full extent of one's wrongs and mistakes.Step 5 of Alcoholics Anonymous"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."This step builds upon the self-examination of Steps 1 to 4, transitioning from personal reflection to external accountability. It also prepares individuals for making amends in subsequent steps, emphasizing the importance of openness and integrity in achieving lasting recovery. Key takeaways: Step 5 builds on the spiritual principles of the 12 Step program, solidifying core elements such as courage, surrender, honesty, and trust as well as the commitment needed for recovery.Admitting your wrongs to this power, through prayer, meditation, or simply saying them out loud, builds the bond you have with it and strengthens your resolve in it for subsequent steps. Alcoholic Anonymous step five reads as follows "admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." This step is often referred to as the "confession" step as it requires admittance of the wrongs caused by a person's alcohol abuse, both to themselves and to others.Step 5 builds on the spiritual principles of the 12 Step program, solidifying core elements such as courage, surrender, honesty, and trust as well as the commitment needed for recovery. Admitting wrongs: Sharing the results of the personal inventory with a trusted person or higher power, acknowledging the nature of one's wrongdoings and seeking accountability. By sharing this truth with another and placing it out in the world, it becomes more tangible. Now, others are aware of this truth, and there is no turning back. Beyond oneself, those who receive this information may help with accountability. A major symptom of addiction is denial and/or hiding other symptoms and warning signs from others. At the very least, one is no longer alone now. [2] Medical advisor Dr. Matt Glowiak PhD, LCPC In Steps 2 & 3 of AA, the participant is asked to accept that there is a higher power to whom they release the control of their addiction. For some, this may be their interpretation of God or another religious deity, for others, it could be an inspiring power.Admitting your wrongs to this power, through prayer, meditation, or simply saying them out loud, builds the bond you have with it and strengthens your resolve in it for subsequent steps. Confession to the self is a direct continuation of the moral inventory built in Step 4. By accepting our wrongs we can release the egotism and fear that surrounds our addiction, helping us to become more honest and open about our misdoings to our higher power and other people. Breaking the cycle of alcohol addiction is a challenge that is rarely achieved without help. As step 5 is about building self-esteem and realization through admitting what wrongs we have committed through alcohol abuse, many find it hard to choose a person to confess their wrongs to.This is why many people use a sponsor for step 5, someone who is either in the program or is a recovering alcoholic, as they are the ones who can truly appreciate another addict's journey without judgment or preconceived notions. They can also help maintain perspective on the nature of the wrongs being confessed as well as keeping blame away from others. Admitting wrongs and confronting how alcohol addiction has affected your life is often very difficult for people facing the 5th step of AA. People struggling with alcohol abuse tend to feel ashamed of their addiction to themselves and will often make excuses for it and how it makes them behave. Confronting these excuses and admitting that they are false to other people can feel intimidating.This is why step 4 has you construct a moral inventory so that you will have already confronted yourself and will have the courage to face shame and rejection by admitting your wrongs. You will also be able to break the pattern of denial and be more willing and prepared to face the subsequent steps.Previous: Step 4 of AANext: Step 6 of AA Was this page helpful? Your feedback allows us to continually improve our information Step six of the 12-step Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) focuses on acceptance. In this step, the person must be willing to affirm the following: "We are entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character." In this stage, individuals work to eliminate "character defects" (like negative behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes and work on acceptance. This can help you reform your character and abandon defects that lead to self-destruction. During the sixth step of addiction treatment, people notice positive behavior and thought pattern changes. With your higher power's help, you release the things that no longer serve you. Over 3 million people use BetterHelp. Their services are: Professional and effective Affordable and convenient Personalized and discreet Easy to start Find a Therapist Answer a few questions to get started Step six prepares individuals for significant change. It encourages individuals to address the underlying causes of their addictive behavior and how these character defects led to an alcohol problem. You can prevent relapse and maintain sobriety by addressing your shortcomings, negative traits, and harmful behaviors. If you stop drinking without being completely honest about your character defects, you can become "dry drunk." Dry drunkenness leads to bitterness and resentfulness, even when an individual is sober. During step six, people establish a strong connection with their higher power. While not directly a spiritual awakening, this relationship with a higher power encourages humility and self-reflection. AA encourages participants to remember the fundamental nature of human beings. Everyone has needs, but how you meet these needs can be defective and self-destructive. People following the 12-step program also learn that their instincts, character traits, and defects are closely linked. They acknowledge that these character faults eventually led to substance misuse and work to undo old habits. AA participants continue to explore the root of their addiction during step six. They pinpoint the underlying emotional and mental issues that led to alcoholism and their old ways. Once identified, participants can take personal inventory of these defects, which may include the following: Greed Lust Pride Jealousy Dishonesty Willfulness Anger Self-pity To acknowledge these shortcomings, you must: Achieve humility by reflecting on times they may have hurt their loved ones Be specific and deliberate about their faults Accept the things that played a part in their drinking problem Avoid self-condemnation and shame for past actions They'll connect you to an addiction and mental health counselor Find a Therapist Answer a few questions to get started Step six is necessary for recovery and sober living. Admitting your powerlessness against drug and alcohol abuse gives you the freedom to move through the rest of the addiction recovery steps. Through the sixth step of the 12-step program, participants can focus on each small victory as they work through all the remaining steps ahead. It also encourages new open-mindedness and the ability to admit fault without falling into harsh self-criticizing patterns. BetterHelp offers affordable mental health care via phone, video, or live-chat. Find a Therapist Answer a few questions to get started You can ask yourself several questions to make step 6 more manageable. These include: Do you have fears about completing step six? What are they? What do you think it means to have a higher power remove your defects? What responsibilities do you have during this step? Do you believe a positive change is possible? Have you noticed changes since you've worked through the previous steps? Do any of your defects give you pleasure? Does that make it more difficult to give up? Do you have any defects that you believe cannot be removed? Are you willing to have them removed? What does it mean to you to surrender? How does surrendering help you complete this step? What can you do to show you are ready for this step? There are several tasks to complete during this step, though you don't have to complete them all. Accomplishing these activities provides a roadmap through step six. Examples of these tasks include: List each of your defects and describe each one List how your behavior demonstrates this defect Explain the effect your behavior has on you and the people in your life Describe the life you'd have if you stopped these behaviors Identify what new behavior could replace a negative one Once you've completed this list, create an affirmation for each defect you've listed. For instance: "I forgive myself for what I did when I was drinking. I am confident in my ability to be sober." "I trust the recovery process. I have the courage and strength to succeed." "I deserve to be happy and sober." After identifying your character defects, come up with three to five positive things you can say to yourself to deter you from engaging in previous behavior. These statements can serve as your reminder that change is possible. For example, if you were prone to lying about your alcohol consumption, a positive statement to say would be: "I am an honest person who does not lie about drinking." Other helpful tips and strategies include: Mindfulness and meditation Yoga and exercise Painting and illustrating Journaling and writing Engaging in musical hobbies and interests Walking Like any of the twelve steps, step six is not immune to common misconceptions. In this section, we clear up what you might not see clearly in accomplishing step six. You might wrongfully assume that they must be perfect step 6 in one try. As with any multi-step program, step 6 is not about perfection but working through character defects with a positive attitude. Remember that the 12-step program isn't a strict goal but more of an encouraging set of guidelines. Another misconception is that a person must remove all these defects immediately. Remember, step six only requires a willingness to address one's shortcomings—not to remedy them all at once. Perhaps the most popular misconception about step six is that individuals can only succeed if they believe in God. People participating in a 12-step program can adhere to any higher power that inspires them to honor and improve life. This is why participants don't necessarily have to be religious to eliminate their alcohol addiction. In Step 7, participants must request help from their chosen higher power to give them the strength to remove the character defects identified in Step 6. This step requires a commitment to honesty, humility, and courage. Step 6 of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) 12-step program is about accepting your character defects and surrendering to a higher power. By asking yourself key questions about the behavior that led to your drinking problems, you'll better understand what you need to change. Finding support for your condition isn't just about joining meetings and sharing your experiences; it's also about surrendering to a higher power. It doesn't have to be a god from a specific religion, just as long as it provides you with a spiritual experience to want to change. Updated on September 29, 2023 Step Five of Alcoholics Anonymous states: "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." This crucial step marks a turning point in recovery, transforming private thoughts into spoken words. The fifth step builds upon the personal inventory taken in Step Four, pushing us to share our discoveries with others. It's a powerful act of vulnerability that breaks down walls of isolation – a common struggle for those battling addiction. AA's program recognizes three essential components in Step Five: Admission to God (as we understand Him) Admission to ourselves Admission to another human being This three-part confession process serves as a spiritual housecleaning, clearing away the debris of guilt and shame that often fuels addictive behaviors. The act of verbally acknowledging our past actions helps create accountability and opens the door to genuine healing. Step Five represents a bridge between self-reflection and active change. By sharing our complete story with another person, we gain new perspectives on our behaviors and patterns. This step's power lies in its ability to transform silent struggles into shared experiences, proving we're not alone in our journey to recovery. The confession aspect of Step Five isn't about punishment – it's about liberation. When we voice our past actions and character defects, we begin to release their power over us, creating space for growth and transformation in our recovery journey. Step Five's confession process involves three distinct admissions – to God (as understood Him), to yourself, and to another human being. Each component serves a unique purpose in your recovery journey. Creates a spiritual foundation for healing Helps release shame and guilt Builds trust in a higher power's forgiveness Reveals hidden truths about past behaviors Breaks down denial patterns Strengthens self-awareness through written inventory review Typically shared with an AA sponsor Brings hidden thoughts and actions into the light Provides external perspective on character defects The self-evaluation process during confession demands rigorous honesty. You'll review your Fourth Step inventory, examining patterns of behavior, resentments, and fears that fueled your drinking. This deep dive into your past actions creates clarity about your role in past conflicts. Many AA members report profound emotional relief after completing their Fifth Step confession. The act of sharing your complete story with another person lifts the weight of secrets and shame. This sharing often brings unexpected gifts – reduced anxiety, better sleep, and a lighter spirit. Looking for support with your Fifth Step? Search "alcoholics anonymous near me" to find local meetings and potential sponsors who can guide you through this transformative process. Fear can create significant barriers when approaching Step Five. Many individuals experience intense anxiety about sharing their deepest secrets and past behaviors. Common fears include: Being judged for past actions Feeling shame about specific incidents Worrying about confidentiality Fear of rejection or abandonment Anxiety about appearing vulnerable These fears are natural responses to the vulnerability required in Step Five. You can work through these concerns by starting with smaller disclosures and gradually building up to more challenging admissions. This measured approach helps build confidence and trust in the process. Creating a safe environment for your Fifth Step is essential. Choose a quiet, private location where you feel comfortable speaking openly. Some people find it helpful to: Write down their fears beforehand Practice sharing difficult topics with a therapist Start with less challenging admissions Remember that sponsors have likely shared similar experiences Trust develops through consistent, honest interactions with your sponsor. Your sponsor's role includes providing a non-judgmental presence and maintaining strict confidentiality. Their experience with the program means they understand the courage required for this step. Remember that every AA member has faced similar fears when completing Step Five. Your sponsor has been through this process and can share their personal experience of working through these challenges. A sponsor serves as your dedicated guide through Step Five's challenging journey of self-disclosure. Your sponsor brings valuable experience, having walked the same path, and understands the weight of sharing personal struggles with alcohol addiction. Here's how they help: The act of sharing with a sponsor cultivates: Raw Honesty: Speaking your truth to someone who's been there helps eliminate denial Deep Self-Awareness: Your sponsor's feedback provides new perspectives on behavioral patterns Genuine Humility: Acknowledging mistakes to another person reduces ego-driven thinking Your sponsor helps identify blind spots in your self-assessment and guides you toward a clearer understanding of your character defects. This relationship becomes a cornerstone of your recovery network, demonstrating the power of human connection in healing. The AA program emphasizes the vital role sponsors play in recovery. Your sponsor becomes living proof that the program works, offering hope through their own story of recovery. Building this relationship strengthens your connection to the AA community. Each honest conversation with your sponsor reinforces the foundation of trust necessary for long-term sobriety. The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous provides essential guidance for Step Five through powerful passages and personal experiences. A key excerpt states: "We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past." This passage emphasizes the need for complete honesty during the confession process. The Big Book describes character defects as manifestations of self-centered fear, highlighting how these traits affected our relationships and decisions. The following character defects are commonly discussed in AA literature: Resentment: Often described as the "number one offender" Self-pity: The tendency to view ourselves as victims Dishonesty: Both with ourselves and others Pride: Preventing us from seeking help or admitting wrongs The spiritual housecleaning aspect of Step Five is depicted as a transformative process. The Big Book explains that through this thorough inventory and confession, we begin experiencing a genuine connection with our Higher Power and fellow humans. Real AA examples from the Big Book show individuals who discovered: Hidden anger towards family members Unacknowledged fears driving their drinking Patterns of manipulation in relationships Deep-seated guilt about past actions The text emphasizes that this spiritual housecleaning serves as a foundation for lasting sobriety and personal growth. Through this process, we gain clarity about our character defects and begin to see how they've shaped our alcoholic behaviors. Step Five creates profound emotional relief through the act of sharing long-held secrets with another person. Many participants report feeling lighter, as if a weight has been lifted from their shoulders. This emotional unburdening often leads to: Reduced anxiety and depression Enhanced self-acceptance Deeper connections with others Greater peace of mind The spiritual growth experienced during Step Five transforms your relationship with yourself and your Higher Power. You'll discover a new sense of authenticity as you: Release guilt and shame Build trust in your recovery journey Develop spiritual awareness Experience genuine humility This combination of emotional relief and spiritual growth creates a solid foundation for continued recovery. Your honesty in Step Five opens the door to deeper self-discovery and healing, preparing you for the transformative work ahead in subsequent steps. Self-reflection during Step Five strengthens your commitment to recovery. Consider these thought-provoking questions as you prepare for your fifth step: What patterns do you notice in your behavior that contributed to your addiction? How have your actions affected those closest to you? What secrets have you been holding onto? For instance, how to heal fear of abandonment could be a valuable exploration. Which aspects of your past feel most difficult to share? What expectations do you have about sharing your story? Try these reflection techniques to deepen your understanding: Write your answers in a private journal Record voice memos of your thoughts Practice speaking your truths aloud before sharing Set aside quiet time for meditation on each question Break down complex emotions into smaller, manageable pieces These questions serve as guideposts through your fifth step journey, helping you identify areas that need attention and healing. Remember, subtle reflections can also provide clarity and insight during this process. Moreover, it is essential to acknowledge that strong relationships often stem from self-love, so reflecting on how your actions have impacted those around you can be a crucial part of the healing journey. Completing Step Five marks a pivotal moment in your addiction treatment journey. The relief and clarity gained through confession create a strong foundation for the remaining steps in your recovery process. Your next steps will focus on: Identifying patterns in your admitted wrongs Developing willingness to change these patterns Building upon the trust established with your sponsor Strengthening your spiritual connection The insights gained during Step Five become practical tools for overcoming addiction. You'll use this newfound self-awareness to work through Steps Six and Seven, which address character defects and shortcomings. Your honest admissions serve as a reference point, helping you recognize behaviors that need changing. Your sponsor remains a vital support as you progress, offering guidance based on the experiences you've shared. This partnership grows stronger as you move forward in your recovery journey. Recovery is a journey you don't have to face alone. There are multiple pathways to access support for overcoming alcohol addiction, such as: 24/7 Online AA Meetings: Connect with the global recovery community from anywhere Local AA Groups: Find in-person meetings in your area through AA's meeting finder Virtual Sponsorship: Connect with experienced AA members ready to guide you through Step Five Professional Support: Licensed therapists and addiction counselors can provide additional guidance The AA helpline is available 24/7 at 1-800-839-1686 for immediate assistance. Our treatment specialists can help you locate resources, find meetings, and connect with professional care. If you're ready to take the next step, consider reaching out to Relief Recovery. They offer a wide range of alcohol rehab programs in Massachusetts to help you achieve sobriety. Visit aa.org to find meetings near you or join online communities dedicated to recovery. Your path to sobriety starts with reaching out. The infamously scary step number four is finally behind you. Step five in AA is next, and it builds on the exercise we completed in the last step. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. The 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous build on each other and are designed to keep you feeling uncomfortable. We've completed our moral inventory, written a list of our faults and our wrongs, and now it's time to confess these wrongs out loud. Keep reading to learn more about what to expect while working step five in AA and why the emotional discomfort is actually a good thing in the long run. The 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are based on a philosophy of spirituality. The foundational principles include surrender, honesty, courage, and willingness. Making a point to admit to yourself, to God, and to another human being the exact nature of your wrongs helps to reinforce these foundational principles and strengthen your commitment to recovery. Step five in AA is often called "confession". It follows the fourth step, in which we make a searching moral inventory of ourselves. After writing out our wrongs and coming to understand them, it's crucial to share them as soon as possible. Sharing these wrongs helps to remove your ego from the situation. Many of these faults likely stem from a dark place and happened in a darker time. Sharing them out loud can help to shine a light on them, taking the shame away and making it less likely that you will make the same mistakes in the future. Metaphorically, you're removing blockages and cobwebs from your past and allowing yourself to move forward. After completing an honest self-reflection of our faults back in step four, read over your list of faults and practice the acceptance you learned back in step one. If you need to, read them out loud to yourself in the mirror. Next, admit your wrongs to God. This honest admission strengthens your bond with your higher power that you began developing in step three. Many alcoholics and addicts feel they are unworthy of loving relationships with people and with God, so this is an opportunity for you to get closer to your higher power. Lastly – to another person. This person will likely be your sponsor or someone else that you trust, someone who understands the recovery process. This is another important exercise in building self-esteem and feeling worthy. Sharing these faults with another human being helps to show you that you are worthy of being heard, of respect, and of forgiveness. Choosing your sponsor or another member of your AA group allows you to speak to someone who knows what it feels like, who can give you perspective, and can keep you from slipping into denial. It's one thing to admit our wrongs to ourselves, like we did in step four. But it's another thing entirely to look another person in the eye and tell them, in detail, what we've done wrong. It's difficult, it's scary, and it can be embarrassing. Emotionally speaking, recovery is not easy. It's not supposed to be, and that's a good thing! If the twelve steps were easy to get through, you'd quickly become complacent. Complacency in recovery is never a good thing; it can make you more likely to relapse. Throughout the 12 steps of AA, it's important to stay humble to avoid this. That's why so many of the steps are designed to remove your ego and keep you from becoming too comfortable. If you're struggling with addiction and are considering trying out the 12 steps of AA to heal, we'd like to help you. At Any Length, we strongly believe in the power of the 12 steps to guide addicted men to lifelong recovery. Give us a call today at 512-598-5595 to find out about our retreat and how our programs can help you to achieve lasting, life-changing results in your journey to recovery. What is step 6 in AA? Navigating the road to recovery from addiction necessitates a deep and honest exploration of self. Embracing the truth of your past actions, rather than concealing them, paves the way for meaningful transformation. Ignoring or downplaying past missteps only stunts personal growth, tethering you to a past defined by addiction.Step Five of Alcoholics Anonymous' 12-Step Program marks a pivotal point in your recovery journey. It builds upon the introspection initiated in Step Four, pushing you to take ownership of past actions and, ultimately, to make amends.Ready to unlock a deeper understanding of this crucial step in your path to sobriety? Let's dive in."Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."Similarly to Step 2 and Step 3, the fifth step's language seems to take on a more spiritual route. The words "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs" might seem to indicate a religious focus. However, it is important to know that AA operates on a wide platform of inclusivity, and the mention of God is not limited to any particular religious belief. From its inception, Alcoholics Anonymous has encouraged participants to interpret the language of the 12 steps as they see fit. The spirituality mentioned in the steps is not confined to traditional religious connotations. Instead, AA advocates for the concept of a "Higher Power," which can mean different things to different people. This Higher Power could be a deity, the AA group itself, or a personalized ideal that helps guide one's recovery. In essence, it can be any source of strength and hope that is greater than oneself.This part of Step 5 prompts us to confess or admit the "nature of our wrongs," marking the first time in the AA journey that participants are encouraged to share their personal wrongs with another person. This "other" human being typically refers to a trusted person, often a sponsor within the AA group or a trusted friend or family member. This process of sharing is believed to bring about a sense of humility and connection, contributing to personal growth and sobriety.It is essential to remember that this step is about honesty with oneself and others. It's about facing and acknowledging the misdeeds made during periods of substance use, thereby reducing feelings of guilt and shame. This process can be a significant turning point on the road to recovery.The phrase "exact nature of our wrongs" calls for a detailed examination and acknowledgment of the harm caused by one's addiction. This deep introspection can be challenging but ultimately catalyzes self-awareness, acceptance, and recovery.In Step 4, a detailed moral inventory is created, and Step 5 is where this inventory is shared and acknowledged openly. The "wrongs" here refer not to the act of addiction itself but specifically to the harmful actions and behaviors that may have stemmed from one's substance use, impacting oneself or others.By admitting the 'exact nature' of these wrongs, one moves away from vague admissions and denial to a clear understanding and acceptance of past mistakes. This action allows the healing process to truly begin.It's clear that the language of Step 5 calls for honesty, openness, humility, and a willingness to face our past actions. While it can seem intimidating, remember you're not alone on this journey. The Sober Sidekick community, alongside AA, provides a safe, supportive space for you to share your experiences and progress on your path to recovery.Step 5 helps you realize that while you're accountable for your past actions, you don't have to shoulder the weight of them indefinitely. Concentrating on personal growth and change becomes paramount. You can only manage your responses to past missteps; admitting these to another person helps pave the way for forgiveness and healing. Trust in the process, believe in your Higher Power and understand that this courageous disclosure is a significant part of your recovery journey.To act on Step Five of AA's 12-step program, you must first embrace honesty. This step calls for a genuine self-assessment. You are being asked to "admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs," which requires courage, openness, and honesty. You have to face the fact that your past actions, driven by addiction, may have caused harm to yourself and others. It's not about self-flagellation but about understanding the impact of your addiction, which is an integral part of the healing process.In the process of admitting the nature of your wrongs, choosing the right person with whom to share this is vital. This person can be a trusted friend, a family member, a mentor, or your AA sponsor. This individual should be someone who can listen without judgment, offer understanding, and, if necessary, provide guidance and support.Remember, you're not trying to receive forgiveness from this person; you're seeking a sounding board, a human mirror who can help you see your past actions clearly. Sharing your experiences helps reduce feelings of shame and guilt associated with your past wrongs.The process of revealing your wrongs can be daunting and emotionally challenging. Many of us naturally fear judgment or rejection when we expose our vulnerabilities. But understand that this step, though uncomfortable, is a courageous act and a significant milestone in your journey to recovery.Breaking down your admission into manageable parts may help alleviate the intensity of this step. Instead of viewing it as one monumental task, consider it a process of sharing a series of smaller confessions.Once you're ready, find a quiet and comfortable space to make your admission. This conversation can be structured around your Step 4 inventory. While it may be challenging, try to explain your wrongs as detailed as possible, avoiding minimizing or exaggerating the truth. Remember, the purpose is not to induce guilt but to facilitate understanding and acceptance.Ensure to express your feelings and emotions during each event you recount. This expression not only helps in the process of healing but also fosters a deeper understanding of the nature and consequences of your past actions.As you tread this journey of revealing your past wrongs and mistakes, you may encounter an old adversary, shame. The process of embracing honesty while liberating can be shadowed by the looming presence of shame. However, Step Five gives you the necessary tools to combat this.Drawing from the courage established in Step Four, you are not just admitting your regrets but actively addressing them. This act of confession to a higher power, to yourself, and to another human being is a profound exercise in humility and acceptance. Each admission and shared regret chips away at the stronghold of shame that addiction often builds.In letting go of shame, it's important to understand that you are not your past actions. This phase of admitting your wrongs is not meant to chain you to your past but to help you learn from it. By stripping the power from shame, you'll find yourself free to grow, change, and heal.Remember, this is a process. The shame won't dissolve instantly, but every step taken, every regret admitted, weakens its hold on your journey to recovery. Allow yourself the grace of patience, for as your recovery progresses, shame's presence will lessen, replaced with the empowering strength of self-acceptance and self-love.Embracing your past actions and letting go of shame is a significant milestone, best achieved with the support of a community that understands and shares your struggles.Addiction recovery is not a solitary endeavor; it thrives on the power of community. Surrounded by individuals who resonate with your experiences, the recovery journey becomes less daunting. With Sober Sidekick at your side, you are truly never alone on your sobriety journey. The Sober Sidekick app was designed for those seeking recovery in the company of like-minded individuals. It connects you with a community of individuals striving for sobriety, providing an opportunity to meet people with shared goals and backgrounds. These connections foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie, which is crucial to the recovery process.If you're seeking accountability, trust, community, and truth on your path to recovery, Sober Sidekick is an excellent starting point. With virtual Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, professional support available 24/7, and a broad community of peers ready to cheer you on every step of the way, the Sober Sidekick community is here to help you conquer your addiction.So, as you embark on your journey through AA's 12-step program, remember that you're not alone. There's a community out there rooting for your success, ready to lend a hand when the going gets tough. With platforms like Sober Sidekick, you're empowered to connect, share, learn, and ultimately heal.History of A.A. | Alcoholics AnonymousResponsibility without Blame for Addiction | PMC Sobriety-focused mutual help fellowship Alcoholics AnonymousNicknameAAFormation1935; 90 years ago (1935)FoundersBill WilsonDr. Bob SmithFounded atAkron, OhioTypeMutual aid addiction recovery twelve-step programHeadquartersNew York, New YorkMembership1,967,613 (2021)Websiteaa.org Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is a global, peer-led mutual-aid fellowship focused on an abstinence-based recovery model from alcoholism through its spiritually inclined twelve-step program.[1] AA's Twelve Traditions, besides emphasizing anonymity, stress lack of hierarchy, staying non-promotional, and non-professional, while also unaffiliated, non-denominational, apolitical and free to all.[1][2][3] As of 2021[update], AA estimated it is active in 180 countries with an estimated membership of nearly two million—73% in the United States and Canada.[4][5] AA traces its origins to a 1935 meeting between Bill Wilson (commonly referred to as Bill W.) and Dr. Bob Smith (Dr. Bob), two individuals seeking to address their shared struggles with alcoholism. Their collaboration, influenced by the Christian revivalist Oxford Group, evolved into a mutual support group that eventually became AA. In 1939, the fellowship published Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How More than One Hundred Men Have Recovered from Alcoholism, colloquially known as the "Big Book". This publication introduced the twelve-step program and provided the basis for the organization's name. Later editions of the book expanded its subtitle to reflect the inclusion of "Thousands of Men and Women".[6] The Twelve Steps outline a suggested program of ongoing drug rehabilitation and self-improvement. A key component involves seeking alignment or divining with a personally defined concept of "God as we understood Him".[a] The steps begin with an acknowledgment of powerlessness over alcohol and the unmanageability of life due to alcoholism. Subsequent steps emphasize rigorous honesty, including the completion of a "searching and fearless moral inventory", acknowledgment of "character defects", sharing the inventory with a trusted person, making amends to individuals harmed, and engaging in regular prayer or meditation to seek "conscious contact with God" and guidance in following divine will. The final step, the 12th, focuses on maintaining the principles of recovery, sharing the message with other alcoholics,[7] and participating in "12th Step work," such as peer sponsorship, organizing meetings, and outreach to institutions like hospitals and prisons.[8] AA meetings differ in format, with variations including personal storytelling, readings from the Big Book, and open discussions. While certain meetings may cater to specific demographic groups, attendance is generally open to anyone with a desire to stop drinking alcohol. The organization is self-supporting through member donations and literature sales. Its operations follow an "inverted pyramid" structure, allowing local groups significant autonomy. AA does not accept external funding or contributions. Empirical evidence supports AA's efficacy. A 2020 Cochrane review found that manualized AA and Twelve-Step Facilitation (TSF) therapy demonstrated higher rates of continuous abstinence compared to alternative treatments, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, with added healthcare cost savings over time.[9][b] Criticism of AA has addressed various aspects of its program and operations. Concerns have been raised about its overall success rate, the perceived religious nature of its approach, and allegations of cult-like elements. Additional critiques include reports of "thirteenth-stepping," where senior members engage romantically with newer members, and legal challenges related to safety and the religious content of court-mandated participation in AA programs. Main article: History of Alcoholics Anonymous Rowland Hazard's journey from Carl Jung's psychiatric treatment to spiritual conversion through the Oxford Group played a pivotal role in shaping the foundations of Alcoholics Anonymous, influencing its principles of recovery.[10] In 1926, Hazard went to Zurich, Switzerland, to seek treatment for alcoholism with psychiatrist Carl Jung. When Hazard ended treatment with Jung after about a year, and came back to the US, he soon resumed drinking, and returned to Jung in Zurich for further treatment. Jung told Hazard that his case was nearly hopeless (as with other alcoholics) and that his only hope might be a "spiritual conversion" with a "religious group".[11][12][13][14] Back in America, Hazard went to the Oxford Group, whose teachings were eventually the source of such AA concepts as "meetings" and "sharing" (public confession), making "restitution", "rigorous honesty" and "surrendering one's will and life to God's care". He became converted to a lifetime of sobriety while on a train ride from New York to Detroit after reading For Sinners Only, by Oxford Group member AJ Russell.[15][16] Hazard underwent a spiritual conversion" with the help of the Group and began to experience the liberation from drink that he was seeking. Members of the group introduced Hazard to Ebby Thacher, whom Hazard brought to the Calvary Rescue Mission, directed by Oxford Group leader Sam Shoemaker.[17] In keeping with the Oxford Group teaching that a new convert must win other converts to preserve his own conversion experience, Thacher contacted his old friend Bill Wilson, whom he knew had a drinking problem.[18][19] Thacher approached Wilson, saying that he had "got religion", was sober, and that Wilson could do the same if he set aside objections and instead formed a personal idea of God, "another power" or "higher power".[20][21]Sobriety token or "chip", given for specified lengths of sobriety. On the back is the Serenity Prayer. Here green is for six months of sobriety; purple is for nine months.Feeling a "kinship of common suffering", Wilson attended his first group gathering, although he was drunk. Within days, Wilson admitted himself to the Charles B. Towns Hospital after drinking four beers on the way—the last alcohol he ever drank. Under the care of Dr. William Duncan Silkworth, an early benefactor of AA, Wilson's detox included the deliriant belladonna.[22] At the hospital, a despairing Wilson experienced a bright flash of light, which he felt to be God revealing himself.[23] Following his hospital discharge, Wilson joined the Oxford Group and tried to recruit other alcoholics to the group. These early efforts to help others kept him sober, but were ineffective in getting anyone else to join the group. Dr. Silkworth suggested that Wilson place less stress on religion (as required by The Oxford Group) and more on the science of treating alcoholism. Bill W. would later write: "The early AA got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Group and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else".[24] According to Mercadante, however, the AA concept of powerlessness over alcohol departs significantly from Oxford Group belief. According to AA, alcoholism cannot be cured, whereas the Oxford Group stressed the possibility of complete victory over sin.[25] Robert Smith's House in Akron In 1935, AA began in Akron, Ohio, as the outcome of a meeting between Wilson—who became known as "Bill W." in AA circles—and Dr. Robert Smith, an Akron surgeon, who would become Wilson's first recruitment success. On a business trip by Bill W. to Akron, he was introduced to the surgeon, who despite connections with the Oxford Group, was unable to stay sober.[26] Bill W. explained that alcoholism affects the mind, emotions, and body, a concept he had learned from Dr. Silkworth at Towns Hospital in New York, where he had been a patient multiple times. Convinced by these insights, Dr. Bob took his last alcoholic drink on 10 June 1935 and never drank again. This date is regarded by AA as its inception.[27] Bill W. and Dr. Bob started working with alcoholics at Akron's City Hospital.[26] One patient, who soon achieved sobriety, joined them and together, the three men formed the foundation of what would later become known as Alcoholics Anonymous.[26] In late 1935, a new group of alcoholics began forming in New York, followed by another in Cleveland in 1939. Over the course of four years, these three initial groups helped around 100 people achieve sobriety.[26] In early 1939, the fellowship published its foundational text, Alcoholics Anonymous, which outlined AA's philosophy; introduced the Twelve Steps; and included the case histories of 30 individuals who had achieved recovery. The Twelve Steps were influenced by the Oxford Group's six steps and various readings, including William James's The Varieties of Religious Experience.[28] This publication marked a significant milestone in AA's development.[26] The first meeting outside the Oxford Group was held at Dr. Bob's house with 80 members in attendance. Dr. Bob began the meeting in his dining room by identifying himself as an alcoholic, and placing his foot on the dining room table, read the Sermon on the Mount from the Gospel of Matthew.[29] The first female member, Florence Rankin, joined AA in March 1937,[30][31] and the first non-Protestant member, a Roman Catholic, joined in 1939.[32] The first Black AA group commenced in 1945 in Washington, D.C., founded by Jim S., an African-American physician from Virginia.[33][34] Alcoholics Anonymous material on walls at The Wilson House, 378 Village Street in downtown East Dorset, Vermont. In 1938, Dr. Bob and Bill created The Alcoholic Foundation in New York, bringing in friends of John D. Rockefeller Jr. as board members. Although they sought to raise significant funds, Rockefeller advised that large contributions might jeopardize the Fellowship. The foundation opened a small office in New York, funded primarily by AA members, to handle inquiries and distribute the Alcoholics Anonymous book. The next year, Rockefeller organized a dinner to promote AA, which further increased the number of inquiries.[35] The office became effective. Each request received a personal reply and a pamphlet, enhancing interest in the book. Consequently, many new AA groups were established, and by the end of 1940, membership had grown to 2,000.[26] In 1939, media coverage, particularly from The Cleveland Plain Dealer, generated a surge of interest and requests for help.[36] The Cleveland group, although small, successfully assisted many alcoholics, quickly growing from 20 to around 500 members.[26] A subsequent article in Liberty magazine resulted in a flood of requests for assistance, further expanding AA's reach.[37] In 1941, The Saturday Evening Post published an article about AA, sparking a surge in inquires, and AA membership tripled over the next year.[38] AA-related interviews on American radio and favorable articles in US magazines led to increased book sales and membership.[39] As the growing fellowship faced disputes over structure, purpose, authority, and publicity, Bill W. began promoting the Twelve Traditions.[40] He first introduced his ideas on these in an April 1946 article for The Grapevine, titled "Twelve Suggested Points for AA Tradition",[40] aiming to preserve the organization's unity and purpose as AA expanded. He described the input he received as a "welter of exciting and fearsome experience" which greatly influenced the development of the Traditions.[40] From December 1947 to November 1948, The Grapevine published the Traditions individually, and in 1950, the First International Convention in Cleveland officially adopted them.[40] In 1951, AA's headquarters in New York expanded its activities, including public relations, support for new groups, services to hospitals and prisons, and cooperation with agencies in the field of alcoholism. It also published standard AA literature and oversaw translations, while the AA Grapevine gained substantial circulation. Despite these essential services, they were managed by a disconnected board of trustees, primarily linked to Bill and Dr. Bob.[26] Recognizing the need for accountability, delegates from across the US and Canada were convened, leading to the first meeting of the AA General Service Conference in 1951.[41] This successful gathering established direct oversight of AA's trusteeship by the fellowship itself, ensuring the organization's future governance. At the 1955 conference in St. Louis, Missouri, Bill W. relinquished stewardship of AA to the General Service Conference,[42] as AA had grown to millions of members internationally.[43] An AA meeting The World Service Meeting (WSM), established in 1969, is a biennial international forum at which AA delegates from around the world exchange ideas and experiences about carrying the message of recovery. Held in various cities around the world, the WSM focuses on sharing strategies to help alcoholics in different countries and languages.[44] Today, AA is present in approximately 180 nations worldwide. By 2018, AA had 2,087,840 members and 120,300 AA groups worldwide.[43] There are AA meetings in Beijing, China.[45] In July 2024, AA launched its first UK-wide advertising campaign with a unique approach—no logos, phone numbers, or links—focusing on subtle messaging like "You Are Not Alone" and "Alcohol Isn't the Answer". The campaign, created by The Raised Eyebrow Society, aims to attract people struggling with alcohol without violating AA's principles of anonymity and non-promotion.[46] AA will celebrate its 100th anniversary meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 2035. The international convention is anticipated to attract tens of thousands of attendees to the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium.[47] Alcoholics Anonymous publishes several books, reports, pamphlets, and other media, including a periodical known as the AA Grapevine.[48] Two books are used primarily: Alcoholics Anonymous (the "Big Book") and, expounding on the big book in regard to its subject, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. As with all AA literature, the texts are freely available on AA.org. Plaque at site of Calumet Building in Newark where much of the text for the "Big Book" of Alcoholics Anonymous was written In 1939, Bill W. and other members wrote the book initially titled Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How More than One Hundred Men Have Recovered from Alcoholism,[49] from which AA drew its name, informally known as the "Big Book". The second edition of the Big Book was released in 1955, the third in 1976, and the fourth in 2001. The first part of the book, which details the program, has remained largely intact since the 1939 edition, with minor statistical updates and edits. The second part contains personal stories that are updated with every edition to reflect current AA membership, resulting in earlier stories being removed—these were published separately in 2003 in the book Experience, Strength, and Hope.[50] The Big Book suggests a twelve-step program in which members admit that they are powerless over alcohol and need help from a "higher power". It offers guidance and strength through prayer and meditation from God or a higher power of their own understanding; take a moral inventory with care to include resentments; list and become ready to remove character defects; list and make amends to those harmed; continue to take a moral inventory, pray, meditate, and try to help other alcoholics recover. The second half of the book, "Personal Stories" (subject to additions, removal, and retitling in subsequent editions), is made of AA members' redemptive autobiographical sketches.[51] AA's Big Book calls alcoholism "an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer". Ernest Kurtz says this is "The closest the book Alcoholics Anonymous comes to a definition of alcoholism".[52] Somewhat divergently in his introduction to The Big Book, non-member and early benefactor William Silkworth said those unable to moderate their drinking suffer from an allergy. In presenting the doctor's postulate, AA said "The doctor's theory that we have an allergy to alcohol interests us. As laymen, our opinion as to its soundness may, of course, mean little. But as ex-problem drinkers, we can say that his explanation makes good sense. It explains many things for which we cannot otherwise account".[53] AA later acknowledged that "alcoholism is not a true allergy, the experts now inform us".[54] The "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" is a book published in 1953 that serves as a key text for AA. Written by AA co-founder Bill W., it provides detailed explanations of the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. The book is commonly used in AA meetings and individual study, offering a framework for understanding the organization's approach to recovery and community. The story of Eddie Rickenbacker "and his courageous company" appears in the book. It pertains to when his plane crashed in the Pacific and is used in the closing remarks of Tradition One: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity".[55] The Grapevine, established in June 1944 by six AA members in New York, became AA's national journal by 1945 and later its international journal.[56] Supported by Bill W., the magazine featured first-person stories, AA news, and discussions on key topics like women in AA and veterans returning from war.[56] Initially intended as a resource for alcoholics worldwide, the Grapevine evolved into a unifying publication for the AA community, chronicling the Fellowship's growth, including the creation of the General Service Structure and publication of later editions of the Big Book. The Twelve Traditions were introduced to AA by Bill W. in April 1946 through an article titled "Twelve Suggested Points for AA Tradition". The AA Preamble, inspired by the foreword of the book Alcoholics Anonymous, was written by one of the Grapevine's early editors Tom. Y. and first appeared in the June 1947 issue.[57][58] In 1986, the Grapevine was reaffirmed as AA's international journal by the General Service Conference.[56] See also: Twelve-step program § Twelve Steps Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps exhibit at AA Intergroup in Akron, Ohio. AA's program extends beyond abstaining from alcohol.[59] Its goal is to effect enough change in the alcoholic's thinking "to bring about recovery from alcoholism"[60] through "an entire psychic change," or spiritual awakening.[61] A spiritual awakening is meant to be achieved by taking the Twelve Steps,[62] and sobriety is furthered by volunteering for AA[63] and regular AA meeting attendance[64] or contact with AA members.[62] Taking AA's 12 steps are a "suggested", but not required, "program of recovery"—also called a "spiritual solution". They start with members admitting to being "powerless over alcohol" (which the Big Book calls an "Illness" or "malady", but never a "disease''), and out of control—for which on going divining and following the will an unspecified 'higher power' ("God, as we understood Him") could restore them to "sanity". In the steps members acknowledge and make amends and seek to correct personal character defects aided by their higher power for guidance. Those "having achieved a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps" are suggested to carry AA's message to other alcoholics. This is often done through meetings of AA groups as well as with members taking on sponsees, although the Big Book makes no mention of the latter term. While taking care to avoid becoming affiliated, some AA members perform outreach to hospitals, treatment centers and correctional facilities.[65] Members are encouraged to find an experienced fellow alcoholic, called a sponsor, to help them understand and follow the AA program. The sponsor should preferably have experienced all twelve of the steps, be the same sex as the sponsored person, and refrain from imposing personal views on the sponsored person.[63] Following the helper therapy principle, sponsors in AA may benefit from their relationship with their charges, as "helping behaviors" correlate with increased abstinence and lower probabilities of binge drinking.[66] The Twelve Traditions provide essential guidelines—not rules—that help AA groups navigate their relationships both internally and with the outside world. These traditions ensure that membership is open to anyone seeking to stop drinking, with no dues or fees required. These Traditions foster an altruistic, unaffiliated, non-coercive, and non-hierarchical organization, limiting AA's mission to helping alcoholics at a non-professional level while avoiding publicity. To prioritize recovery, the traditions discourage hierarchies, dogma, public controversies, property acquisition, and outside contributions. Members are advised against using AA for personal gain or public prestige, and anonymity is emphasized, particularly in media, with no prescribed consequences for breaches.[67] AA meetings serve as a space where individuals discuss recovery from alcoholism, with flexibility in how meetings are conducted. While AA offers pamphlets suggesting formats,[68] groups have the autonomy to organize their meetings according to their preferences, as long as their decisions do not impact other groups or AA as a whole.[67] Despite cultural differences influencing certain rituals, many elements of AA meetings remain consistent worldwide. AA meetings encompass a variety of formats, each designed to serve different needs. Open meetings are accessible to anyone, including non-alcoholics who can attend as observers. In contrast, closed meetings are reserved for individuals who identify as having a desire to stop drinking, a declaration that cannot be questioned by other members.[67] Speaker meetings feature one or more members who share their personal stories of recovery, fostering connection and understanding among participants.[69] Big Book meetings focus on reading and discussing passages from AA's foundational text, while sharing meetings provide an open platform for members to speak freely and share their experiences, with or without a predetermined topic.[70] AA meetings are gatherings where recovery from alcoholism is discussed. One perspective sees them as "quasi-ritualized therapeutic sessions run by and for, alcoholics".[71] In recent years, online meetings have become popular, allowing members to connect virtually through platforms like Zoom and What's App. Offline or in-person meetings, often referred to as "brick and mortar" meetings, take place in physical locations, and some groups host hybrid meetings, enabling participants to attend either in person or virtually. Inclusivity is a core principle of AA meetings, which welcome all alcoholics, though some are tailored to specific demographics such as gender, age, profession, or cultural background. Since the mid-1970s, several 'agnostic' or 'no-prayer' AA groups have begun across the US, Canada, and other parts of the world, which hold meetings that adhere to a tradition allowing alcoholics to freely express their doubts or disbelief that spirituality will help their recovery, and these meetings forgo the use of opening or closing prayers.[72][73] Meetings in the United States are held in a variety of languages including Armenian, English, Farsi, Finnish, French, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Spanish.[74]Headquarters of Alcohólicos Anónimos in Montevideo, Uruguay At some point during the meeting, a basket is passed around for voluntary contributions. AA's 7th tradition requires that groups be "self-supporting, declining outside contributions".[67] The Serenity Prayer is commonly used in AA meetings as a tool for reflection and guidance. It was called the AA prayer in the 1940s.[75] Often recited at meetings, it emphasizes the concepts of acceptance, courage, and wisdom, which align with the principles of the AA program. The prayer encourages individuals to accept things they cannot change, to find the courage to make changes where possible, and to seek the wisdom to distinguish between the two. Building for Spanish-speaking AA group in Westlake neighborhood, Los Angeles Sobriety coins, also known as sobriety chips, are tokens given to members of AA to signify the duration of their sobriety. While the chip system is common, it is not universally adopted across all AA groups. The tradition began with Sister Ignatia in Akron, Ohio, who distributed medallions to newly released patients as reminders to avoid drinking.[76] The actual sobriety chip as known today is believed to have originated in 1942 in Indianapolis, gaining popularity as various AA groups adopted the practice.[77] Typically, different colored chips represent milestones of sobriety within the first year, with tokens awarded for 24 hours, 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, and beyond, culminating in a bronze chip for one year of sobriety. AA members celebrate Founders Day on the weekend closest to 10 June, marking the anniversary of the organization with thousands of attendees engaging in tours of historical sites, sharing recovery stories, and participating in related activities in Akron, Ohio.[78] Main article: Twelve Traditions A regional service center for Alcoholics Anonymous AA describes itself as "not organized in the formal or political sense"[43] and has been referred to as a "benign anarchy," borrowing a phrase from anarchy theorist Peter Kropotkin.[79] The Twelve Traditions guide the functioning of individual AA groups, while the Twelve Concepts for World Service outline how the organization operates on a global scale.[80] Each AA group is self-governing, with AA World Services acting only in an advisory capacity. This "inverted pyramid" style of governance has been key to the organization's resilience and adaptability. In Ireland, Shane Butler noted that AA's lack of top-level leadership might make it seem unsustainable, but its structure has proven extremely robust since its establishment there in 1946.[81] AA's 21-member Board of Trustees includes seven "nonalcoholic friends of the fellowship," though the organization is primarily served and run by alcoholics. Members who accept service positions, termed "trusted servants," hold these roles for limited terms, typically ranging from three months to two years, depending on the position and group vote. This approach ensures regular rotation and participation from a broad spectrum of members, maintaining AA's commitment to

shared responsibility and leadership.[43] AA is entirely self-supporting, relying on voluntary contributions from its members to cover expenses.[43] Contributions to the General Service Office (GSO) are limited to $5,000 per member per year.[82] In addition to these contributions, more than 50% of AA's income comes from the sale of AA literature, such as books and pamphlets.[83] This practice aligns with AA's Seventh Tradition, which emphasizes financial independence by not accepting donations from outside individuals or organizations. The Central Office is also fully self-supporting through the sale of literature and member contributions. The Eighth Tradition permits AA to employ "special workers" for roles that require specific expertise or full-time responsibilities, such as administrative tasks.[67] However, these paid roles do not involve working directly with alcoholics in need of help, a function known as the "Twelfth Step". Calls from alcoholics seeking assistance are always passed on to sober AA members who have volunteered to handle them, ensuring the program remains grounded in its peer-to-peer support model.[84] The AA Central Office coordinates activities such as printing literature, responding to public inquiries, and organizing conferences. It operates independently but ensures alignment with the core principles of the organization. Other International General Service Offices—such as those in Australia, Costa Rica, and Russia—function independently of AA World Services in New York, reflecting AA's decentralized and autonomous structure.[85] Many AA meetings take place in treatment facilities. Carrying the message of AA into treatment facilities was how the co-founders of AA first remained sober. They discovered great value in working with alcoholics who are still suffering, and that even if the alcoholic they were working with did not stay sober, they did.[86][87][88] Bill W. wrote, "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics".[89] Bill Wilson visited Towns Hospital in New York City in an attempt to help the alcoholics who were patients there in 1934. At St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, Ohio, Smith worked with still more alcoholics. In 1939, a New York mental institution, Rockland State Hospital, was one of the first institutions to allow AA hospital groups. Service to corrections and treatment facilities used to be combined until the General Service Conference, in 1977, voted to dissolve its Institutions Committee and form two separate committees, one for treatment facilities, and one for correctional facilities.[90] In the United States and Canada, AA meetings are held in hundreds of correctional facilities. The AA General Service Office has published a workbook with detailed recommendations for methods of approaching correctional-facility officials with the intent of developing an in-prison AA program.[91] In addition, AA publishes a variety of pamphlets specifically for the incarcerated alcoholic.[92] Additionally, the AA General Service Office provides a pamphlet with guidelines for members working with incarcerated alcoholics.[93] AA group in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, Mexico AA's New York General Service Office survey of over 6,000 members in Canada and the United States concluded that, in North America, AA members who responded to the survey were 62% male and 38% female. The survey found that 89% of AA members were white.[94] Average member sobriety is slightly under 10 years with 36% sober more than ten years, 13% sober from five to ten years, 24% sober from one to five years, and 27% sober less than one year.[94] Before coming to AA, 63% of members received some type of treatment or counseling, such as medical, psychological, or spiritual. After coming to AA, 59% received outside treatment or counseling. Of those members, 84% said that outside help played an important part in their recovery.[94] The same survey showed that AA received 32% of its membership from other members, another 32% from treatment facilities, 30% were self-motivated to attend AA, 12% of its membership from court-ordered attendance, and only 1% of AA members decided to join based on information obtained from the Internet. People taking the survey were allowed to select multiple answers for what motivated them to join AA.[94] A 2024 study found that Black, Hispanic, and younger adults are less likely to attend AA meetings compared to white and older adults, with these disparities remaining consistent over time.[95] Several metrics are used to evaluate the success of AA including abstinence, reduced drinking intensity, reduced alcohol-related consequences, addiction severity, and healthcare costs.[9] Because of the anonymous and voluntary nature of AA meetings, it has been difficult to perform random trials with them. However, environmental and quasi-experiment studies suggest that AA can help alcoholics make positive changes.[96][97][98] Until recently, ethical and operational issues had prevented robust randomized controlled trials from being conducted comparing 12-step programs directly to other approaches.[99] There have been numerous studies on the effectiveness of AA. A 2006 study by Rudolf H. Moos and Bernice S. Moos saw a 67% success rate 16 years later for the 24.9% of alcoholics who ended up, on their own, undergoing a lot of AA treatment.[100][101] However, this may be influenced by self-selection bias.[102][103] Project MATCH, a 1990s multi-site study, found AA to be more effective than no treatment.[104] Other studies link increased AA attendance with higher spirituality and reduced alcohol consumption.[105][106][107] A 2020 Cochrane review concluded that AA is more effective than other treatments, such as MET and CBT, in terms of abstinence rates. It also noted similar success in reducing drinking and alcohol-related problems, though this conclusion was based on moderate-certainty evidence.[108][109] The review found that AA participation via AA twelve steps facilitation (AA/TSF) had sustained remission rates from 20-60% above other well-established treatments. Additionally, 4 of the 5 economic studies in the review found that AA/TSF lowered healthcare costs considerably.[c][9][111] Nick Heather, an addiction researcher, critiqued the review, arguing it may have a sample bias and that it failed to measure outcomes like quality of life or alcohol dependence, which are important for evaluating recovery.[112][113] The authors responded, stating their review showed that AA is at least as effective as other treatments and more cost-effective.[113][114] The authors also noted the lack of quality-of-life measures was due to the limitations of the reviewed studies.[113] A 2020 systematic review indicated that manualized AA and Twelve-Step Facilitation (TSF) therapy yields more healthcare cost savings and leads to higher continuous abstinence rates.[b][9][115] A longitudinal study suggests that LifeRing and SMART Recovery fared worse than AA across several outcomes, however the effects are insignificant when controlling for the baseline alcohol goal of total abstinence.[116] More recent studies employing randomized and blinded trials have shown 12-step programs provide similar benefit compared to motivational enhancement therapy (MET) and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), and were more effective in producing continuous abstinence and remission compared to these approaches.[117] The 2001–2002 National Epidemiological Survey on Alcoholism and Related Conditions (NESARC) found that 3.4% of respondents had attended a 12-step meeting. Of those, 988 had ceased attending, 348 continued attending, and 105 were newcomers. These figures help to understand engagement and disengagement patterns within AA.[118] Although AA claims that spirituality is the primary mechanism for achieving change and recovery, there is growing evidence that suggests this is only true for a minority of AA attendees with a high addiction severity.[119][120] Instead, AA's beneficial effects are carried predominantly by social, cognitive and affective mechanisms.[121] However, atheist and agnostic people are less likely to initiate and sustain AA attendance in comparison to spiritual and religious people.[120] The effectiveness of AA, compared to other methods and treatments, has been challenged over the years.[122] Lance Dodes, in The Sober Truth, claims only five to eight percent of the people who go to one or more AA meetings achieve sobriety.[123] Dodes opposes the idea that a social network is needed to overcome substance abuse.[124] Dodes' assertion that AA is ineffective has been criticized[125][126][127][128] Some other experts claim that the book's conclusion that "[12-step] approaches are almost completely ineffective and even harmful in treating substance use disorders" is wrong.[129][130] In a 2015 article for The Atlantic, Gabrielle Glaser criticized the dominance of AA in the treatment of addiction in the United States, citing Dodes's figures and a 2006 Cochrane report, to claim AA had a low success rate.[131] In the past, others have criticized 12-step programs as pseudoscientific[99][132] Her figures and assertions, however were criticized by other experts.[125][126][127][133] AA shares the view that acceptance of one's inherent limitations is critical to finding one's proper place among other humans and God. Such ideas are described as "Counter-Enlightenment" because they are contrary to the Enlightenment's ideal that humans have the capacity to make their lives and societies a heaven on Earth using their own power and reason.[59] After evaluating AA's literature and observing AA meetings for sixteen months, sociologists David R. Rudy and Arthur L. Greil found that for an AA member to remain sober, a high level of commitment is necessary. This commitment is facilitated by a change in the member's worldview. They argue that to help members stay sober, AA must provide an all-encompassing worldview while creating and sustaining an atmosphere of transcendence in the organization. To be all-encompassing, AA's ideology emphasizes tolerance rather than a narrow religious worldview that may make the organization unpalatable to potential members and thereby limit its effectiveness. AA's emphasis on the spiritual nature of its program, however, is necessary to institutionalize a feeling of transcendence. A tension results from the risk that the necessity of transcendence, if taken too literally, would compromise AA's efforts to maintain a broad appeal. As this tension is an integral part of AA, Rudy and Greil argue that AA is best described as a quasi-religious organization.[134] Zoombombing emerged as a significant challenge for AA meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many groups moved online.[135] Disruptive individuals often infiltrated these virtual meetings, harassing participants and sharing inappropriate content.[135] Some AA members experienced racial hatred.[136] This intrusion undermined the safe, supportive environment essential for recovery, raising concerns about privacy and security. In response, AA groups and Zoom implemented stricter access controls and guidelines to protect participants and maintain a welcoming atmosphere for those seeking help.[137] Though AA usually avoids the term disease[citation needed], 1973 conference-approved literature said "we had the disease of alcoholism",[138] while Living Sober, published in 1975, contains several references to alcoholism as a disease,[139]:23,32,40 including a chapter urging the reader to "Remember that alcoholism is an incurable, progressive, fatal disease".[139]:7–10 Regardless of official positions, since AA's inception, most members have believed alcoholism to be a disease.[52] In its association with AA, as well as a good deal of its broader acceptance, stems from many members propagating it.[140] Bill Wilson explained in 1960 why AA had refrained from using the term disease:We AA's have never called alcoholism a disease because, technically speaking, it is not a disease entity. For example, there is no such thing as heart disease. Instead, there are many separate heart ailments or combinations of them. It is something like that with alcoholism. Therefore, we did not wish to get in wrong with the medical profession by pronouncing alcoholism a disease entity. Hence, we have always called it an illness or a malady—a far safer term for us to use.[141] "Thirteenth-stepping" is a term used to describe a predatory behavior in AA where some individuals exploit vulnerable members for sexual relationships. This can involve unwanted advances and harassment, often targeting newer members who may be more susceptible due to their recovery status.[142] In 2003, a study in the Journal of Addiction Nursing sampled 55 women in AA and found that 35% of these women had experienced a "pass" and 29% had felt seduced at least once in AA settings. This has also happened with new male members who received guidance from older female AA members pursuing sexual company. The authors suggest that both men and women must be prepared for this behavior or find male or female-only groups.[143] As of 2010, women-only meetings are a very prevalent part of AA culture, and AA has become more welcoming for women.[144] AA's pamphlet on sponsorship suggests that men be sponsored by men and women be sponsored by women.[145] AA also has a safety flier which states that "Unwanted sexual advances and predatory behaviors are in conflict with carrying the AA message of recovery".[146] See also: Alcoholism § Management Stanton Peele argued that some AA groups apply the disease model to all problem drinkers, whether or not they are "full-blown" alcoholics.[147] Along with Nancy Shute, Peele has advocated that besides AA, other options should be readily available to those problem drinkers who can manage their drinking with the right treatment.[148] The Big Book says "moderate drinkers" and "a certain type of hard drinker" can stop or moderate their drinking. The Big Book suggests no program for these drinkers, but instead seeks to help drinkers without "power of choice in drink".[149] In 1983, a review stated that the AA program's focus on admission of having a problem increases deviant stigma and strips members of their previous cultural identity, replacing it with the deviant identity.[150] A 1985 study based on observations of AA meetings warned of detrimental iatrogenic effects of the twelve-step philosophy and concluded that AA uses many methods that are also used by cults.[151] A later review disagreed, stating that AA's program bore little resemblance to religious cult practices.[152] In 2014, George Eman Vaillant published a paper making the case that Alcoholics Anonymous is not a cult.[153] Some have criticized 12-step programs as "a cult that relies on God as the mechanism of action"[154] and as "overly theistic and outdated".[99] Others have cited the necessity of a "higher power" (an "HP") in formal AA as creating dependence on outside factors rather than internal efficacy.[99][155] Gabrielle Glaser called 12-step programs as being "faith-based",[131] but 12-step programs allow for a very wide diversity of spiritual beliefs, and there are a growing number of secular 12-step meetings.[156][157] Reception to secular 12 step meetings from within AA has been mixed. In 2011, secular meetings in Toronto, where the 12 steps were altered to remove references to God and prayer, were delisted from the Toronto AA online and print directories, effectively removing them from the network of meetings. They appealed this decision, but were rejected, leading to a complaint to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario. The Toronto co-ordinating body, the Greater Toronto Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous, argued both that as a special interest group they have the right to restrict its membership, and that a belief in God is a requirement for programs in Toronto. Mediation between the two groups resulted in the delisted groups being listed again, however the secular groups would be required to not alter the 12 steps.[158][159] See also: Rational Recovery § Court-mandated twelve-step program attendance In the Fifth Step, AA members typically reveal their own past misconduct to their sponsors. US courts have not extended the status of privileged communication, such as physician-patient privilege or clergy–penitent privilege, to communications between an AA member and their sponsor.[160][161] United States courts have ruled that inmates, parolees, and probationers cannot be ordered to attend AA. Though AA itself was not deemed a religion, it was ruled that it contained enough religious components (variously described in Griffin v. Coughlin below as, inter alia, "religion", "religious activity", "religious exercise") to make coerced attendance at AA meetings a violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the constitution.[162][163] In 2007, the Ninth Circuit of the US Court of Appeals stated that a parolee who was ordered to attend AA had standing to sue his parole office.[164][165] The family of Karla Mendez, who was murdered in 2011 by a man she met at an AA meeting, filed a civil lawsuit in 2012 against AA asserting AA had a "reckless disregard for, and deliberate indifference...to the safety and security of victims attending AA meetings who are repeatedly preyed upon at those meetings by financial, violent, and sexual predators".[166][167] The lawsuit against AA was dismissed in 2016.[168][169] In May 2017, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services Inc. filed a lawsuit in the Supreme Court of the State of New York seeking the return of the original manuscript of the Big Book from its then-owner. AAWS claimed that the manuscript had been given to them as a gift in 1979.[170] This action was criticized by many members of Alcoholics Anonymous since they didn't want their parent organization engaged in public lawsuits.[171] Alcoholics Anonymous World Services Inc. asked the court to voluntarily discontinue the action in November 2017.[172] While AA emphasizes personal anonymity, many notable individuals have publicly acknowledged their participation in the program for various lengths of time. Roger Ebert stated he was a member of AA according to a 2009 blog entry he wrote.[173] Eminem has posted pictures of AA Sobriety coins.[174][175] Anthony Hopkins has credited AA with saving him and marked 48 years of sobriety in 2023.[176][177] Others who have spoken publicly about their AA attendance include James K. Baxter,[178] Art Carney,[179] Bonnie Raitt,[180] Mychal Judge,[181] Moby,[182] Hank Azaria,[183] Matthew Perry,[184] Jim Irsay,[185][186] Demi Lovato,[187][188] Elton John,[189] Tom Waits,[190] Capers Williamson,[191] among others. Some have received pushback, including Brad Pitt recently [192] and criticism from some people in AA regarding their guidelines.[193] My Name Is Bill W. – dramatized biography of co-founder Bill Wilson.[194][195] When Love Is Not Enough: The Lois Wilson Story – a 2010 film about the wife of founder Bill Wilson, and the beginnings of Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon.[196][197] Bill W. – a 2011 biographical documentary film that tells the story of Bill Wilson using interviews, recreations, and rare archival material.[198][199] A Walk Among the Tombstones (2015), a mystery/suspense film based on Lawrence Block's books featuring Matthew Scudder, a recovering alcoholic detective whose AA membership is a central element of the plot.[200] When a Man Loves a Woman – a school counselor attends AA meetings in a residential treatment facility.[201] Clean and Sober – an addict (alcohol, cocaine) visits an AA meeting to get a sponsor.[202] Days of Wine and Roses – a 1962 film about a married couple struggling with alcoholism. Jack Lemmon's character attends an AA meeting in the film.[203] Drunks – a 1995 film starring Richard Lewis as an alcoholic who leaves an AA meeting and relapses. The film cuts back and forth between his eventual relapse and the other meeting attendees.[204] Come Back, Little Sheba – A 1952 film based on a play of the same title about a loveless marriage where the husband played by Burt Lancaster is an alcoholic who gets help from two members of the local AA chapter.[205] A 1977 TV drama was also based on the play. I'll Cry Tomorrow – A 1955 film about singer Lillian Roth played by Susan Hayward who goes to AA to help her stop drinking. The film was based on Roth's autobiography of the same name detailing her alcoholism and sobriety through AA.[206][207] You Kill Me – a 2007 crime-comedy film starring Ben Kingsley as a mob hit man who is an alcoholic with a drinking problem who is forced to accept a job at a mortuary and go to AA meetings.[208][209] Smashed – a 2012 drama film starring Mary Elizabeth Winstead. An elementary school teacher's drinking begins to interfere with her job, so she attempts to get sober in AA.[210] Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot – a 2018 biography/comedy/drama by Gus Van Sant, based on the life of cartoonist John Callahan.[211] Doctor Sleep – Released in 2019, Doctor Sleep is a sequel to The Shining, directed by Mike Flanagan and based on Stephen King's work. Ewan McGregor stars as a man who, after overcoming his own demons through AA, helps others do the same.[212] In "Days of Wine and D'oh'ses" (The Simpsons) after watching a video of his drunken antics at his birthday party, Barney resolves to get sober. He attends Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, cleans up his appearance, and attends helicopter-flying lessons. He remains sober by the episode's end, though his alcoholism is replaced by an unhealthy dependence on coffee.[213] Bloody Mary - A 2005 episode of the animated TV series South Park where Randy Marsh must attend AA meetings after getting a DUI. In CBS' Elementary, Jonny Lee Miller plays an adaptation of Sherlock Holmes who is a recovering drug addict. Several episodes are centered around AA meetings and the process of recovery.[214] Faithful (Macklemore song) released in October 2022 AA (song) by American country music singer Walker Hayes In 2024, Jelly Roll revealed that an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting served as the inspiration for his new album track, "Winning Streak".[215] Bill W. and Dr. Bob is a play by Stephen Bergman and Janet Surrey that chronicles the lives of AA founders Bill Wilson and Dr. Robert Smith, and their wives, and has been produced Off-Broadway and in multiple countries since its debut in 2007. Adult Children of Alcoholics Al-Anon/Alateen Calix Society Community reinforcement approach and family training (CRAFT) Drug addiction recovery groups Drug rehabilitation Group psychotherapy Health benefits of quitting alcohol List of twelve-step groups Long-term effects of alcohol Recovery approach Short-term effects of alcohol Sober companion Stepping Stones (house), home of Bill W. Washingtonian movement * The Twelve Steps are written in the past tense because when originally introduced in the Big Book, the authors present the Twelve Steps as "this is what we did."

^ a b Regarding "manualized AA and Twelve-Step Facilitation (TSF) therapy", manualized' means "the treatment is based on standardized content delivered in a linear or modular fashion to ensure that the same treatment is delivered across time and different sites where the intervention may be implemented. This ensures that the treatment can be replicated - a key factor in confirming the findings across different studies using the same treatment." (2020 Cochrane review article, p. 5, PDF version). ^ "Twelve-Step Facilitation (TSF) interventions include extended counseling, adopting some of the techniques and principles of AA, as well as brief interventions designed to link individuals to community AA groups."[110] ^ a b AA Grapevine (15 May 2013), A.A. Preamble (PDF), AA General Service Office, archived (PDF) from the original on 9 October 2022, retrieved 13 May 2017 ^ Michael Gross (1 December 2010). "Alcoholics Anonymous: Still Sober After 75 Years". 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