

HELLO AND WELCOME TO ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

We don't know exactly what brought you here but we're sure you didn't wake up and say to yourself, "It's such a beautiful day, the birds are singing and I've got some time to kill, I think I'll go and see what A.A.'s is all about."

You may have awakened after another night of drinking regretting what you did the night before. You may have gotten into a fight with your spouse, mate or another family member the night before and you regret what you said or did, or worse yet, you don't remember what you said or did. You may have gotten a DUI or wound up in jail, or your employer may be threatening to fire you if you don't do something, whatever the reason you wound up here.

You now have the opportunity to take a look at your situation and do something about it should you choose to do so.

In this beginner's packet there are several pamphlets that explain the A.A. program:

A NEWCOMER ASKS answers a lot of questions you may have.

THIS IS A.A. is an introduction to the A.A. recovery program.

The paper, **Information on Alcoholics Anonymous** will tell you what A.A. does and doesn't do.

A.A. AT A GLANCE and **WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE** addresses some questions as well as gives you a brief history about A.A.

PROBLEMS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL addresses drug addiction.

YOUR A.A. GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE lets you about A.A.'s main office in New York.

There is also a **wallet card** with the Twelve Steps and Traditions, as well as A.A.'s Preamble and the Serenity Prayer

There is a **Meeting Schedule** included with this packet that lists all the A.A. meetings in Osceola County *and* the 24 hour **Hotline numbers** you can call for Osceola County and Central Florida.

One of the most important pamphlets included in this packet is called **IS A.A. FOR YOU?**

It lists 12 questions that only you can answer. Please take the time to go to a quiet place and answer the questions for you and you alone. You need not show these answers to anybody as they are here to help you decide if you have a drinking problem and want to do something about it. (REMEMBER. TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE). If, after you answer these questions, you decide you don't have a problem with alcohol, hang on to the material anyway, in case you change your mind. If you are still not sure, we invite you to attend a few meetings. You might want to check out a few speaker meetings and see if you can identify with the speaker (look for the similarities, not the differences).

If you are court ordered to attend A.A. meetings and have to have a paper signed, be aware that you need to attend a full meeting from beginning to end in order to get your paper signed. If you arrive late or leave early don't be surprised when the chairperson refuses to sign your paper.

IF YOU WANT TO DRINK- THAT'S YOUR BUSINESS

IF YOU WANT TO STOP- WE CAN HELP

And if you want our help there is a list of a few suggestions on the back of this page that can aid you in your quest for sobriety.

SOME SUGGESTIONS THAT MAY HELP YOU TO STAY SOBER

If you have decided you want to stop drinking and want help here are a few suggestions that may be of some use to you.

1. **GO TO AS MANY MEETINGS AS YOU CAN** in the beginning. It is there that you will find other people who have the same problem as you and are working on a solution. Try to arrive a half an hour early and plan to stay a little later after the meeting to talk to some of the people one on one. The enclosed meeting guide will let you know when and where the meetings are in OSCEOLA County. If you need to go to other meetings outside the county you can call the Hotline number and they will direct you to these other meetings. Most meetings last about an hour and are non-smoking, but there are usually areas where you can smoke before and after the meeting. All meetings are either **Open (O)** or **Closed (C)**. At Open meetings you can bring a friend or family member for support. Closed meetings are just for those who have a desire to stop drinking. At **STP (STEP STUDY)** meetings they usually read from the book (**12 Steps & 12 Traditions**) for a portion of the meeting then discuss a particular Step.
At **BB (BIG BOOK)** meetings they read from the book (**Alcoholics Anonymous**, which is commonly referred to as our Big Book) for a portion of the meeting and then discuss it.
SPKR (SPEAKER) meetings are meetings where someone shares their experience, strength and hope and tells what it was like, what happened and what it is like now. These are usually Open meetings.
(W) WOMEN'S meetings, just for women.
(M) MEN'S meetings, just for men.
(BEGIN) BEGINNERS (meetings usually discuss the 1st three Steps. These are excellent meetings for you to attend.
2. **GET AS MANY PHONE NUMBERS AS YOU CAN AND CALL THEM.** Men stick with men's numbers and women stick with women's numbers. Recovering alcoholics are known to be busy people and you may have to call a few numbers before you get a live person. Also, please note that Alcoholics Anonymous is not a dating service. We are here to work on recovery from alcoholism and not find a mate. If all else fails when you are trying to call someone and you need to talk, you can always call the Hotline as there is always someone there to answer or return your call.
3. **DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED BY THE TERM G O D.** in our Steps or meetings. When we refer to GOD (or Higher Power) in our meetings and Steps we are talking about a god **of our own understanding**. Alcoholics Anonymous is a mixture of any and all religious persuasions and invites you to find a god (or higher power) of your own understanding, not ours.
4. **GET A SPONSOR.** Again, *preferably of the same sex*, who has a working knowledge of the Steps and who also has a sponsor. They will be your guide to working the Steps and can help answer more personal questions.