



News Sheet

Issue: June / July 2019

SPEAKING AT NON-AA MEETINGS

A.A. groups and central offices everywhere are receiving an increasing number of requests for A.A. members to speak at meetings outside the Fellowship, for organizations that want to know more about the A.A. approach to alcoholism. These have brought forth many queries about “Should I?,” “What to say?” and “How to say it?” *(Extract from AAWS Speaking at non-AA meetings) (Pamphlet is available to purchase from GSO & CSO)*

Should such talks be made?

An A.A. group makes its own decision regarding the desirability of supplying A.A. speakers for such meetings in general, or for any particular meeting. Sometimes, the inviting organization indicates that its interest is primarily in alcoholism, rather than in A.A. as such. A group may wish to refer such requests to one of the state supported or private agencies concerned with broader aspects of alcoholism. However, it is entirely in keeping with the A.A. Traditions for an A.A. member to speak at non-A.A. meetings about A.A. and our recovery program if a few simple precautions are observed. Groups in many areas consider this type of speaking to be one of the cornerstones of a constructive A.A. public information program. They believe that it provides an excellent opportunity to demonstrate our willingness to be “friendly with our friends,” to inform the public concerning the role of A.A. in the community, and above all, to carry the message of our recovery to alcoholics through a third person. A large proportion of today’s newcomers are making their first approach to A.A. at the suggestion of a non-alcoholic well-wisher — a doctor, member of the clergy, lawyer, social worker, employer, union representative, relative, or friend to whom A.A. has become favorably known. *(Extract from AAWS Speaking at non-AA meetings)*

This News Sheet is intended as an aid to Service in AA.

The views and opinions expressed in the News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland.

Information on speaking at non-AA meetings is also available in our ‘Guidelines for Public Information (PI Kit)’

Available from GSO & CSO (Item P52)

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PREAMBLE ©

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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Who is qualified?

In seeking to carry the message through a third person by speaking at non-A.A. meetings, A.A. members therefore assume a serious responsibility. Even though they are careful to explain that they are not speaking for A.A. as a whole, many members of the audience will base their good or bad opinion of the Fellowship on what is said and how it is said. The reaction of non-alcoholic listeners and their consequent referring or failure to refer alcoholics to A.A. may someday mean the difference between life and death to

still-suffering alcoholics. Profound as these considerations are, they do not imply that the responsibility should be restricted to A.A.s trained as professional speakers or to “elder statesmen and women.” An A.A. member who has been sober in A.A. for a sufficient length of time to discuss our recovery program — the Steps, Traditions, and service — intelligently should be capable of a good job.

(Extract from AAWS Speaking at non-AA meetings)

A Brief Outline for a Talk

Identification as an alcoholic (first name only, usually); request that anonymity be respected, giving reasons — Traditions, etc. A card with the following brief statement on anonymity can be obtained from G.S.O.:

There may be some here who are not familiar with our Tradition of personal anonymity at the public level: “Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.” Thus, we respectfully ask that A.A. speakers and A.A. members not be photographed, videotaped, or identified by full name on audiotapes or in any published or broadcast reports of our meetings, including those reports on the Internet or other new media technologies. The assurance of anonymity is essential in our efforts to help other problem drinkers who may wish to share our recovery program with us. And our Tradition of anonymity reminds us

that A.A. principles come before personalities.

They mention the fact that they speak for themselves only, not for A.A. as a whole.

“We should recognize that our experience to speak about alcoholism is limited in subject matter to Alcoholics Anonymous and its recovery program; hence, any statement in reference to other or broader aspects of the problem of alcoholism should be accurately attributed to authoritative sources outside the movement, identified by name.”

Why knowledge about A.A. is important? (Discuss)

What precautions should A.A. members take when telling their personal recovery stories at non-A.A. meetings? (Discuss)

(Extract from AAWS Speaking at non-AA meetings)

The Man on the Bed

This full colour painting first appeared as a Grapevine centre spread in the December 1955 issue. It proved so popular that four colour prints were made available separately. The artist, Robert M., was a volunteer illustrator for the Grapevine, and in 1956 he presented the painting to AA co founder Bill W. In his thank you letter Bill wrote: "Your representation of 'The Man on the Bed' hangs in my studio at Bedford Hills.... The whole heart and essence of AA can be seen by just looking at it."



TRADITIONS CHECKLIST—TRADITION 3

The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion. THE AA GRAPEVINE INC., PO BOX 1980, GRAND CENTRAL STATION, NEW YORK, NY 10163-1980

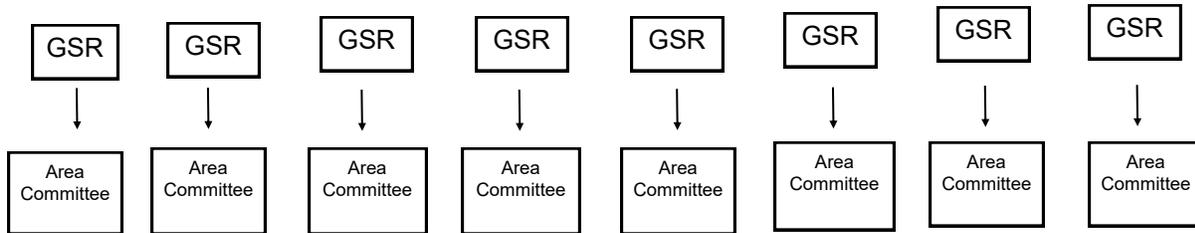
1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
5. Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to AA before? What his other problems are?

STRUCTURE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

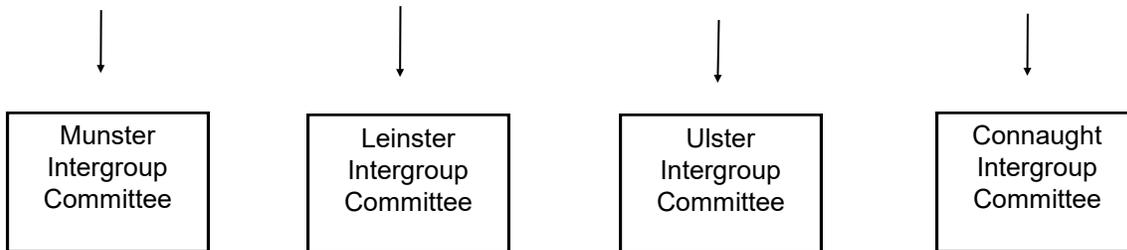
AA GROUPS (G)



TWO GSR's FROM EACH GROUP FORM AREA COMMITTEE



FOUR MEMBERS FROM EACH AREA COMMITTEE FORM PROVINCIAL INTERGROUP COMMITTEES



FOUR DELEGATES FROM EACH PROVINCIAL INTERGROUP TO GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE



All Ireland Convention 2020
Friday 17th to Sunday 19th April 2020
 Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

See our website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
 for a full list of forthcoming events in Ireland and abroad.