

National PI/CPC Patter September 2023



The goal of AA Public Information and Co-operation with the Professional Community (PI&CPC) is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is achieved in two ways, through informing the general public about the AA programme and through reaching "the third person", whose work is or may be involved with the active alcoholic

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Manning Great Lakes District Holds Public Information Lunch

The Manning Lakes District which is located on the mid NSW Coast and is part of Area A , Eastern Region, recently held a Public Information lunch. Previously we had run a Public Meeting as part of our annual rally on the Saturday night. Although our members enjoyed it, the meeting didn't achieve its aim as over the years very few people outside AA attended. So we decided to try a lunch.

We booked a local club and organized a 2 course meal. We produced a flyer as well as personal invitations. We also sent personal emails to prospective attendees. Our local paper also published a short article with an invitation. Members were organized to attend and given jobs to do such as welcoming guests and staffing the literature table. Members were spread out among the tables as were our guests .

The personal touch worked well. We had 14 attend, including our Local MP and the Mayor. Also attending were counsellors, representatives for local charities, pastors and priests. Three staff from the local Aboriginal Health Centre, including the Doctor and the Drug and Alcohol worker attended too. What we found worrying was that the Drug and Alcohol worker knew nothing of AA. Perhaps that is a reflection on us, AA and our past inability to get the message out there to people working with alcoholics in our community. We were so glad she came and it really brought home how important Public Information and these events are.

We started the lunch with a welcome and overview, which included our Anonymity Statement. We followed that with the Video presentation on the Cochrane Report. We emphasized that the report was totally independent from AA.

Lunch was served and our guests had a chance to talk at the table with the 10 A members. Each guest received a basic pack of literature and we had extra literature and posters available at the literature table. We all felt the lunch was a great success. A local journalist who attended wrote a very good article which was published in our local paper. We tried hard to complete the lunch in 60 minutes as we know people are busy and need to go back to work. However we ended up going over by 15 minutes.

Next time we would consider a shorter video and give more time to the informal chatting over lunch which our guests who seemed to enjoy the individual stories.



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Alcoholics Anonymous Professional Awareness Luncheon, June 21st 2023

When it comes to carrying the AA message, there is nothing like 22 keen sober AA members to do just that and do it well. It was great to see how we all polished up after a few weeks of being on the 'AA Outback Tag-A-long', 'Carrying the message to remote areas' from Lightning Ridge to Mount Isa. Donning on our Sunday best and shaking off the dust of the outback we were keen to share with those who were attending just how life changing the AA fellowship has been for us. The 'Alcoholics Anonymous Professional Awareness Luncheon' in Roma Queensland (Population 6,500) on June 21st 2023 was to be one of two to be held on the Tag -A-long journey, the other at Emerald, so it was important to all of us that it was well received and had a successful out come. I was fortunate to be asked to be one of the greeters at the door and welcomed the 32 local Allied Health workers who had accepted our invitation, this included the Mayor of Roma along with clergy men and women, as well as Lifeline, Headspace, Drug Arm, D & A Counsellors ,Aboriginal Health and Social Workers just to name a few, with one Hospital Counsellor having travelled from a neighboring town 250km away. Alternate seating arrangements between guests and AA members was encouraged to allow for easy, casual and comfortable communication. a warm welcome. AA provided guests with a delicious locally made lunch while AA members were more than willing to cover the cost of their own. One of the highlights I felt at the luncheon was a video Does AA Work ; a study by the Cochrane Foundation (Gold standard in medical research), which outlined the important research and studies done that showed without a doubt how successful the AA program was in comparison to other methods. Personally, I had never been aware of this research and was blown away by the information and outcome of the research which was conducted by an independent party

This AA Professional Awareness luncheon has already received positive results with the South West Hospital and Health Service Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Service team interested in learning more about the services provided by Alcoholics Anonymous in the South West, as well as referral pathways. Brian (Luncheon MC) has been invited to be part of a "Health Team Leaders" zoom conference on the 21 st July next month.

Like most of us in AA I owe my life and my sanity to the AA fellowship. I am 6.5 years sober and learning and expanding my knowledge every day. I put myself out there on the 'Tag' as I felt that I was cruising in my sobriety, just doing the minimum I needed in order to stay sober, avoiding service positions 'because I didn't have time' and not fully understanding how the AA fellowship saves lives. I fronted up to the 'AA Professional Awareness Luncheon' somewhat reluctantly as I would have, at the time, preferred to play tourist around the township of Roma as we were only there for a limited time. However, I am so very grateful to have been asked to do this service work. It gave me a sense of pride to belong to this amazing fellowship, it educated me with regards to the need for more awareness in our community and showed me what is and must be the main objective in my life, and that is Step 12, to carry the message. Romi

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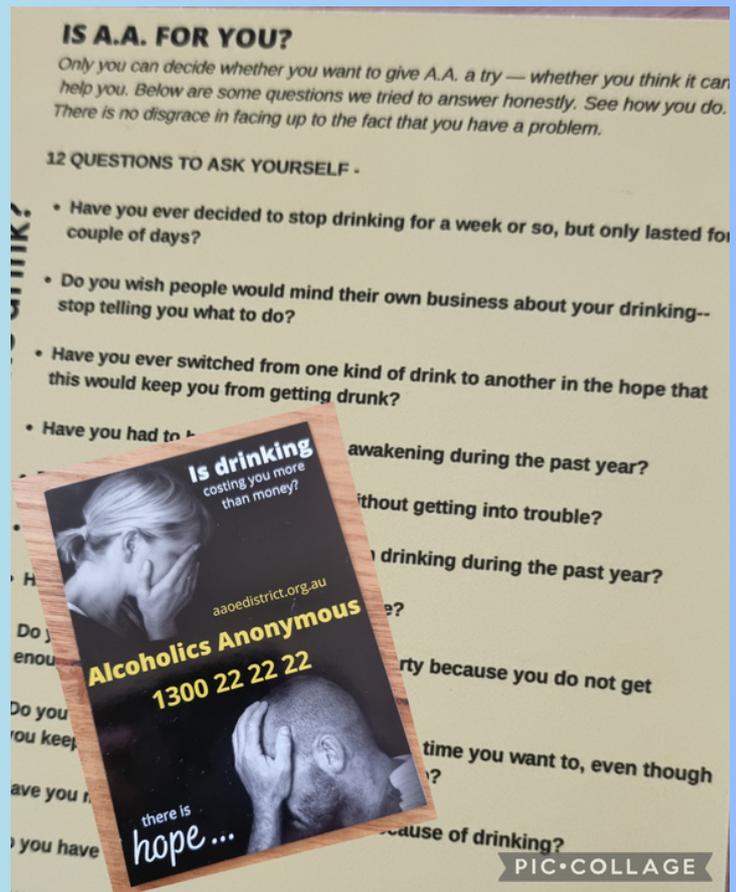
MHS Conference Report, In July of this year the Central Region Area B Delegate Anna L and PI&CPC officer Connor O reached out to the organizers of the 2023 Mental Health Service Conference. Through these communications AA received a free complimentary exhibition booth because of our Not-For-Profit status. After finalizing the registration, using Area B funds to select AA literature, posters, pens with Local CSO contact information and two large pull up banners with the South Australian CSO information and AA logo were ordered and bought. The weekend of the conference was from the 15th-18th of August, held at the Adelaide Convention Centre and attended by over 1000 health care workers. 5 AA members rotated through running the booth across the 4-day event. On the 15th Regional Trustee Grant T set up the booth displaying literature, posters and banners. Area B Treatments and Corrections Facilitator Richie E manned the booth on the opening morning. He described it as an honour to interact and carry the AA message to many, many professionals who travelled from all over Australia and New Zealand. Dylan M who manned the booth on the 17th valued being able to set straight some of the genuine misconceptions that many in the professional community (and the public) had about Alcoholics Anonymous, such as: that we are religious, that we take money from governments and that it costs money to attend meetings. Chatting with people in an honest way about what he has seen in AA was in his words 'a wonderful experience'. Other Local members Louise, Sam and National PI/CPC coordinator Rob C connected with the professionals they had the opportunity to speak to. We were able to use this event as a networking exercise to gather contacts for future events that AA will be having – including the 2024 National Awareness Forum Luncheon to be held in Adelaide during November 2024 before the National Forum. This type of conference is where AA needs to be. We need members who can attend these events and live the traditions to "cooperate, never criticize" potential friends of AA. I believe the next MHS conference is to be held in Canberra 2024

Yours in service, Connor O.

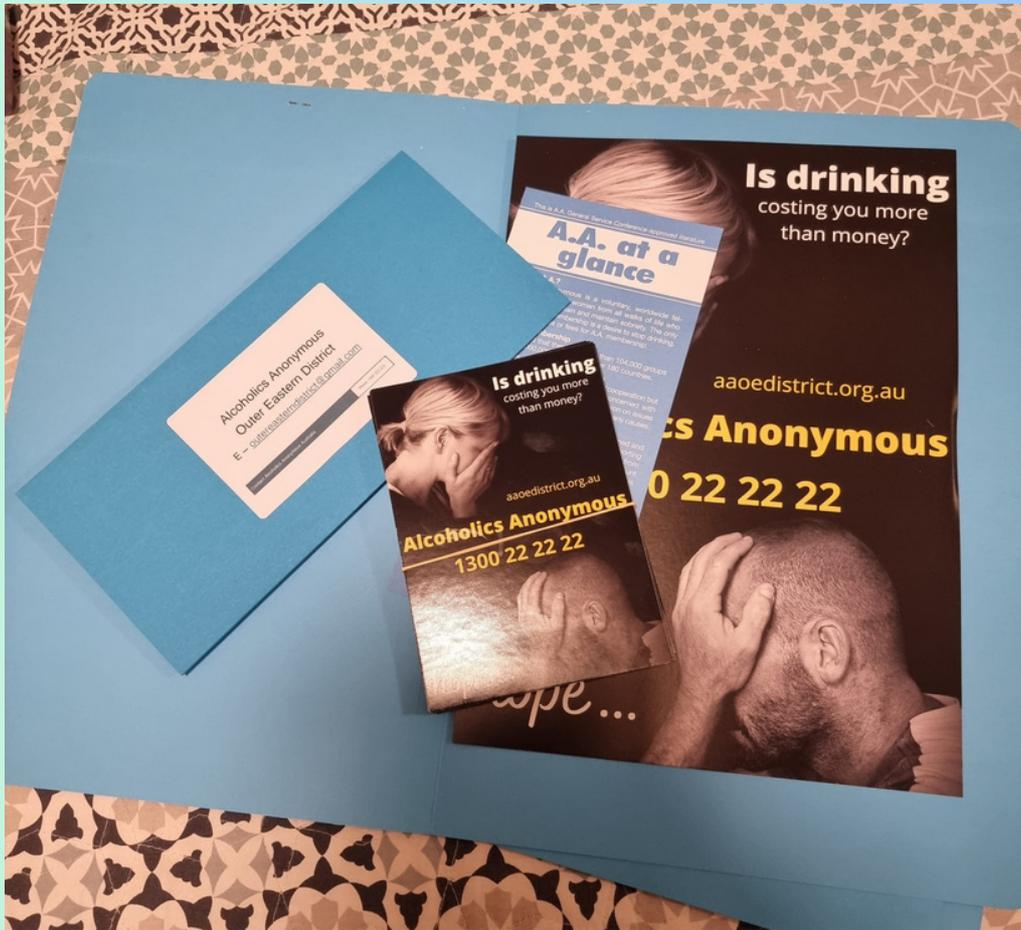
The Pamphlet Speaking at Non-AA meetings is available from CSOs and the GSO

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The Outer Eastern District (Melbourne) was established in December 2021, with a small number of GSR's from local groups and an enthusiastic committee. We have all worked at establishing a solid grounding and slowly getting the OED word out to local groups. We have been accruing some funds for a PI drive and for some local advertising on small format outdoor billboards (Civic Guides) - set for installation late September. We're all eagerly anticipating the roll out and hope that they help to get the AA solution out, to those who need it. We now get on average 8-12 in attendance each month and we hope that our District continues to grow in numbers and in enthusiasm. If our recent Professionals PI Drive is any indication of our willingness then we're in a good position. We had about 15 members all meet on a Saturday morning to set out in cars and distribute 50 PI packs to local GP's, pharmacies, Police and laundromats. It was a fund morning and we met for brunch and fellowship afterwards. It was good fun, more than anything else. We recently had a couple of thousand AA postcards made up (Vistaprint) and 100 x A4 size posters. We deliver 1 poster, 20 postcards and whatever other PI we'd like to use (AA at a glance, AA and Professionals) in a Manila folder- and it seemed to work well. We are hoping that the postcards will end up in people's handbags and back pockets.... where prospective members can take them home to ponder the 12 questions. We will see how it goes! Chrissie W - OED DCM



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Inner City District, Melbourne ran a Doctors Forum on the 30th of August via zoom from 7am - 8:30am with 15 doctors attending. Two AA members shared their experience, Doctor Stephen Jurd shared on the Cochrane Report' findings on the efficacy of 12 step fellowships in long-term recovery. The Event was rounded out with questions from the Doctors about how to get alcoholics to AA,

So far a group of Kilburn members in the Central Region after liaising with our district (para district, area A) and help from our CSO have been handing out flyers, posters and pens at nearby public places in our suburb and suburbs next to Kilburn, keeping it simple, such as Clinics/Chemists (flyers and pamphlets and link to the Cochrane report which gathered much interest) places of worship, Libraries (accepted big books), Post Offices/Supermarkets (posters) We were surprised how excited and positive the majority of people were to have awareness we existed in their community. State And Federal MP Offices- Great to hear the MPs were interested and REALLY keen for more pamphlets once they hand out ones we gave, poster is on their window - one might even come to visit our meeting (we're an open AA meeting) soon which I thought is so good - one of their staff was very surprised at our average attendance and that there were that many alcoholics "in Kilburn" asking "is alcohol a problem in this suburb?" maybe not realizing AA is everywhere. They were stunned how many meetings we have- so think we are creating a lot of awareness about AA.

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From self-loathing to sobriety, two local women share their remarkable journey

By Mel Des

Local women Ruth* and Mary* have had vastly different life trajectories, but they share two very significant truths: they are both alcoholics, and they have both found joy in sobriety.

After decades of drinking in excess, to the point of hallucinating and blacking out, Ruth realised she needed to change her ways when she saw her enlarged liver on an X-ray in 2013.

"I was advised by my doctor to watch my drinking. But I was quite unsuccessful at doing that," she said.

"Not drinking made me miserable. I quit for four months and my husband was thankful I started again because I was that miserable."

She admits she reached rock bottom in 2017.

"I had humiliated myself so many times, even when not drinking, that I lost faith in myself and my ability to navigate this world," she said.

Years of thinking she was "just a failure"



Ruth with a special 'Steps to Recovery' coin. On the reverse side it writes "Have faith again".

ure" led her into a deep pit of self-loathing and she admitted herself to hospital where she was put on suicide watch.

In 2020 she was introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) through an American spiritual group.

"But stigma, fear and ego prevented me from attending for three years. Furthermore, I liked my wine. I liked the idea of going into a space where people drank alcohol, ate, and enjoyed intoxicating themselves. I thought that by not drinking I wasn't fun or even interesting. I simply didn't want to stop, enlarged liver or not," she said.

Earlier this year she was prompted again to visit an AA meeting. And this time she took a chance.

"I walked into Armadale AA and was greeted so gently and with a depth of kindness. I felt like I was the most important and valued person in the world. I was so humbled I had to blink back the tears," she said. "That night everyone seemed to be talking directly to me."

"I discovered that the fellow I had followed from the carpark into AA and sat next to, had learned to read through the program. He donated coins on my behalf, and once again I was humbled."

"My recovery began that night and I just wanted - needed - to live in head first."

Over the course of the program, Ruth realised her relentless dependency on alcohol, and her inability to stop on one drink were wrapped up in a complex health disorder. "I finally understood it wasn't my fault. I simply demonstrated the signs and symptoms of a disease. No one had put it in those words before,"

she said. Since completing her 12 steps, Ruth says she's become a new person.

"I went through a personality change. I used to have resistant depression - medication didn't help. Now I have joy - there's no grief."

"And it's like my body has forgotten alcohol too. I went to a tavern the other day for lunch with a friend. I was around others who were drinking and it didn't bother me one bit."

"And my son's come out of his room - he's my mate again."

Yesterday Ruth proudly received her "three months sober" coin.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2020-21 more than a quarter of Aussie adults (five million people) drank more than the prescribed 10 standard drinks per week, or five or fewer on any single day.

The same statistics show that people employed full time were twice as likely as those who were unemployed to have exceeded the guideline (32 percent compared to 16.8 percent).

And people living in more affluent areas were more likely than those living in areas of most disadvantage to exceed the guideline (30.7 percent compared to 13.5 percent).

People aged 55-64 were more likely to drink regularly and exceed the weekly limit, while young people (18-24) were more likely to binge drink than their grandparents. A study by the Australian National University showed the pandemic exacerbated problem drinking. "It's an equal opportunity destroyer," Mary said, who hasn't had a drink since her first AA meeting back in March 1994.

"I'd burnt my life to the ground at the age of 25."

"I was a weekend drinker, so I never believed I could be an alcoholic. I never drank at home - because that's what alcoholics do. "But while my parents were all either travelling, or pursuing their careers or having families, here I was in the front bar of a hotel every Friday night."

She was compelled to go to an AA meeting as a last resort.

"If I didn't like the meeting or the people there, my 'Plan B' was to kill myself," she said.

Thankfully she found the same kind of fellowship and compassion as Ruth had discovered.

"They welcomed me like a long-lost friend. And I hadn't been welcomed anywhere in a long, long time," she said.

"You just fit in, you're a member when you see you are."

Since beginning her life again in 1994, Mary has gone from a high school dropout to a psychologist with a Masters degree and a family of her own.

It's been almost 30 years and Mary still finds joy in AA meetings.

There are up to 26,000 members of Alcoholics Anonymous in Australia, who meet at almost 2000 regular local meetings around the country. In 2020, AA celebrated its Diamond Jubilee (75th anniversary) in Australia. AA Armadale meets three times per week, from 7.30pm-9pm, Wednesdays and Fridays, and 10.30am-12pm on Saturdays at the Leathers Unit of the Armadale Hospital.

To find your nearest meeting, go to meetings.aa.org.au

*Names changed for anonymity

ADVERTISEMENT

I wrote my story, my walk in a story for the WA AA Serenity magazine, it was well received. I then discovered, through the National PI/CPC WhatsApp Noticeboard, that local newspapers were printing half page AA adverts and remembered that our local newspaper was getting thinner that I thought I would copy that story and send it to the editor of the Examiner newspaper that is distributed free to our local areas. I was then contacted by Mel who was directed by her editor to interview me-I asked for advice, also I understood the 12 traditions, so aware I had to be careful. Tuija who is 20 odd years sober offered to come to the meeting which was fantastic as then we had me, 3 months sober and Tuija's perspective and different stories.

Naomi

Is drinking costing you more than money?

Don't suffer any longer...

there is hope... Call Alcoholics Anonymous 1300 22 22 22

Is drinking costing you more than money?

Don't suffer any longer...

Call Alcoholics Anonymous 1300 22 22 22

Is drinking costing you more than money?

Don't suffer any longer...

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Alcoholics Anonymous

DRINKING PROBLEM ???

Call Alcoholics Anonymous 1300 22 22 22

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Monday Redcliffe Living Sober PI group, Joe, Jodie and Mick have been extremely busy visiting and providing resources to over 80 businesses over the last 4 weeks on the Redcliffe peninsular! The dynamic team engaged with both the youth center and indigenous center and the interest was more than what they anticipated. They were very receptive to the PI materials.

The Highlight for AA as a whole - is the recognition of our Posters actively displayed on the front counters of business eg; AA cards are now displaying at the local Moreton Bay Boat Club.

"This has been extremely liberating considering Moreton Bay Boat Club is occupied by some who may be suffering this disease" one member said. Carol from Bray Park has also been super busy delivering resources to dozens of venues and businesses in the Samford Valley area with great results and great feedback.

Our Moreton Bay North District PI group was able to get together some people to get this story into Big Rigs national truckin' magazine. Thanks to everyone who assisted in pulling this story together! Enjoy! One of our AA members interviewed another AA member who is in the trucking industry. Read that story here:

Big Rigs link:

https://issuu.com/primecreativemedia-2016/docs/br18_1.9.23_lr/48

Thankyou to everyone who assisted with The Coal Face story, placing me in touch with a couple of AA Members who are FIFO Coal Miners

Read their story here:

The Coal Face link:

<https://thecoalface.net.au/2023/06/08/if-you-think-you-have-a-problem-then-maybe-you-do/?amp=1>

Area B PI/CPC NER QLD
Stephen

TOP STORIES

If you think you have a problem, then maybe you do.

Published 3 months ago on June 8, 2023
By @theCoalFace

48 COLUMN

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 1 2023 BUSINESS.COM.AU

Starting the journey to sobriety

AUSTRALIANS by average are fond of a drink, with many life events ending in a toast, or a hard day finishing up with a cold drink at the bar.

However, some Australians do have a problem with the excessive of drinks when they do start, when too is not enough, and one drink is too many for these people, the ones wondering if they might possibly have an issue with the drink, if the problem in their life might be alcohol-related, this one is for you.

Ken grew up in large towns in Australia, one with the reach of a capillary, still small enough away and comfortable and well-served.

By his own account "I didn't have a bad upbringing. Hazed up at school a little, left at 15, got a job straight away, just like many of us. At 18, I found alcohol just like many of us as well."

As time went on though, Ken found himself drinking more and more on go through the day. Coming home from work, drinking from the early afternoon until midnight, waking up the next morning, drinking for the time he could come home from work and start drinking again.

When his 28th birthday came around, the drinking really took off, and Ken spent years drinking for effect, no longer for the taste of the alcohol.

Unable to turn up for work, Ken ceased to be able to function, and his life just became about the next three quarters.

"It all came crashing down on his 30th birthday with a drinking session ending in a hospital visit. Based on the premise of getting assistance with his drinking, Ken found a drug and alcohol counselor, who helped him find somewhere to get out.

While drying out, Ken found the Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship, a 12-step program to help those who have trouble achieving sobriety on their own. That was over 18 years ago now, and Ken is still not drinking to this day. And his life has changed for the better because of it.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other, that they may help themselves and others to achieve sobriety. A spiritual program that has helped many before, and all that is required is a desire to stop drinking.

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings can be found all over Australia and the world, with Zoom allowing people from different countries all over the world, at any time during the day to be amongst like-minded people, to reach out for help if required.

And here was Ken's life changed? Ken told us "At the end of my drinking, I had lost family, job, I had lost my life, in sobriety I have been able to achieve so much more than I thought I was capable of. Tracking across the Nullarbor, engaging life on my terms, living my own life and enjoying every day."

Ken does understand that reaching out for help can be hard, and that Alcoholics Anonymous meetings may be hard to attend for truckers, with their schedules all over the place.

For truckers, he has this advice: "It's not like you can change the traffic on the highway and take the pitstop moment, a meeting, although I did do that once. Since the pandemic, the anxiety of Zoom meetings and phone meetings has increased. This means that you can be anywhere, at any time, with the aid of a smart phone you can take part in a check up from the back up, and be able to relate to others with the same issue as you.

If this sounds like you, that you may want help, then check out the Alcoholics Anonymous website at aa.org.au to find your next convenient meeting to start on the journey to sobriety.

Asking for help might be difficult, but not asking for help might end up being more difficult."

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Is Drinking

Costing you more than money?

there is *hope...*

Call Alcoholics Anonymous

1300 22 22 22



Advisory Action #005/2022

Conference resolved to accept the Conference Public Information & Co-operation with the Professional Community committee's recommendation that any idea that encourages individuals to participate in PI&CPC should be supported and that the week of December 11 should be 'National Put up an AA Poster' week.

The Groups voted for this week coinciding with Bill W's Sobriety date of Dec. 11 to be put a poster up week, that can be at a shopping center Noticeboard, Police Stations, Facebook, Newspapers, Doctors surgery's, Chemist's, Medical Center's, etc, etc

As servants of AA we must always ask and be respectful of those places we leave any AA Posters/Flyers/Literature/AA Cards to try reach those still suffering in the hope they may find there way out too.

National PI/CPC Patter

LET'S NOT WATER DOWN THE SOUP

AA claims no monopoly on therapy for the alcoholic, so our Big Book tells us. But our book does contain precise instructions for our recovery. Bill W. even wrote a second book, the "Twelve and Twelve," to further explain these instructions. If we have other problems, emotional or physical, we are encouraged to seek appropriate professionals. We are to cooperate with our friends in other fields, though AA's primary purpose dictates that it must remain non-allied with any other groups. But I wonder this: Does cooperation with professionals have to mean blending all approaches together, declaring that it's "all the same"? Must we become all things to all people, or pretend there's no difference between AA and a dozen other fellowships. . . just lump them all together and call the result "program"? Is this realistic? Is it honest? Is it fair? So many of our friends--therapists, clergy, authors, etc.--have expounded their views on recovery in recent years that their explanations have become catch phrases and their notions accepted as AA doctrine although they are not. Some of us even repeat these theories from the podium when asked to pass on the message of AA. When a member comes to an AA meeting for the time-tested "medicine" of the Fellowship, is it responsible and compassionate to give him or her our favourite self-help technique instead? And what of the newcomers who are not yet familiar with our simple but powerful set of spiritual tools? Does my "right" to say whatever I please take precedence over the newcomer's need to hear what really works? Not everything that sounds like AA is an actual AA suggestion. Some of "our" cherished little books and pamphlets are actually religious or institutional literature. They may be nice, but that doesn't make them AA. Where in our Big Book or the "Twelve and Twelve" are we urged to put ourselves first on our amends list? Where in our instructions is it written that we cannot love others unless we first love ourselves. . . that we cannot forgive others unless we first forgive ourselves? If these notions were essential AA teachings, our Big Book wouldn't emphasize "putting the needs of others first" and our Step book wouldn't urge us to forgive others first if we are seeking forgiveness for ourselves. As therapeutic approaches for "healing the wounded self" and for helping the alcoholic to "feel good about himself," these notions are probably useful and appropriate. But must we water down the plain and simple instructions that have helped thousands to recover, with new, improved (and possibly less painful) techniques? Our ultimate purpose as recovering alcoholics is made plain in the Big Book: to be of service to God and other people. It is not a "selfish program" after all. AA is a fellowship and our only "program" is designed to deflate the self, not soothe it. Our purpose is to have a profound spiritual experience and to be of service to others, not merely to "feel good about ourselves." We are called to something much higher than being nice, well-adjusted types with comfortable lifestyles. Our joy and duty is to share what we have. Let's keep it simple and let's not water down the soup. Besides, our deadly disease requires more than mere "positive thinking" and "getting in touch with oneself."

Only the very best will do, and we already have it.

Abe S | Belchertown, Massachusetts

April 1993 AA Grapevine

Reprinted with permission from the AA Grapevine

National PI/CPC Patter



Progress Not Perfection
South Yarra
Sunday, 10:30 am

Baptist Church South Yarra
12 Surrey Rd

**Auslan sign language interpretation
provided live and on Zoom
on the 1st Sunday of the month.**



Zoom ID- 394896349

PW - 992668

https://meetings.aa.org.au/meetings/progress-not-perfection-south-yarra-sunday/?fbclid=IwAR3ZJet_MyIsiguo8-aRbNZNE7BqioOwEKfeOn9M7GhoC9oYLObLQWHtrFk

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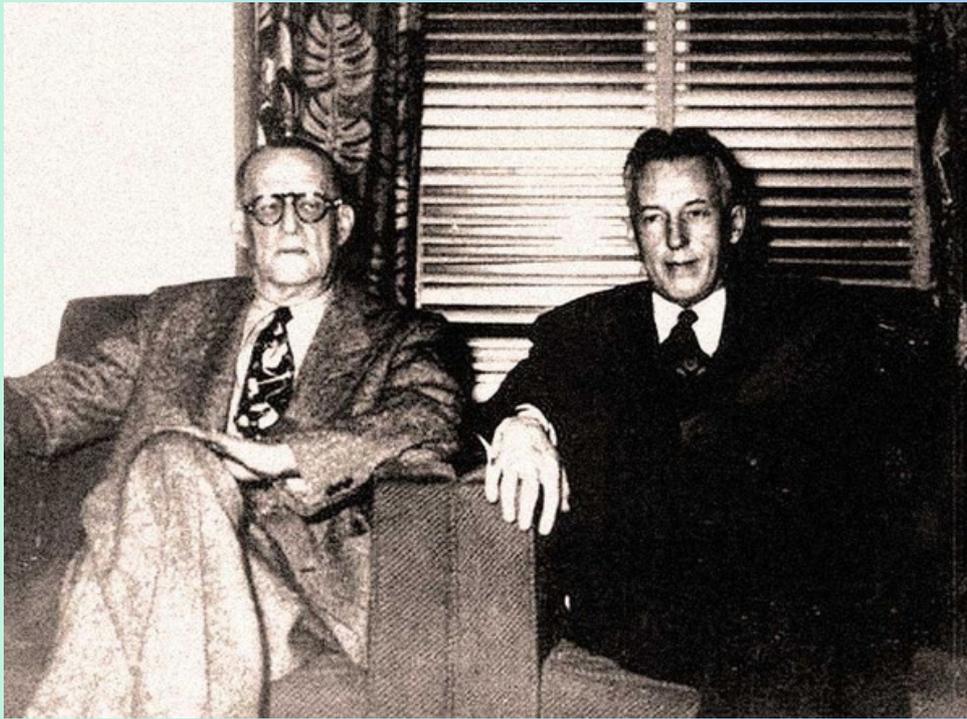
**FRI, 22 NOV 2024 5:00 PM -
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FOR ALL ENQUIRIES CONTACT
AANATIONALPIANDCPC@GMAIL.COM

National PI/CPC Patter

Our Twelfth Step, carrying the message, is the basic service that the AA Fellowship gives: this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, AA is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.



All of AA is voluntary , no one is paid for their 12 step work or Service, it is for our own recovery we take the steps and pass on, AA service is our chance to repay what we have been given freely to continue indefinitely the message of AA , send all PI/CPC posts or stories for the PI Patter to aanationalpiandcpc@gmail.com or for more information on our Service Structure contact your Local CSO, General Service Rep., Area Delegate or the GSO.

In Unity and Service ,

Rob C

National PI/CPC Coordinator

aanationalpiandcpc@gmail.com