

# Your First AA Meeting? Below is your guide!

If you'd like to attend an AA meeting for the first time, to find out if AA is for you, here's what to do:

Choose a meeting time and location.

By phone: Call us on our information line 1-866-227-0015, day or night, and a sober member of AA will be happy to recommend a first-time meeting close to where you live. You can also see all our meetings listed on this website.

## **Just show up!**

Meetings start promptly at the time specified and generally last one hour. We suggest for your first meeting arriving a little bit early. Sometimes there might be people gathered outside. If you are unsure if you have the right place, just ask one of them if this is where the AA meeting is. If it is, then you could tell them this is your first meeting and ask them where to go. They will be happy to help you out. Inside the meeting room, there will be people milling about, setting up coffee and putting out literature. Help yourself to a coffee and find a seat.

## **What happens during an AA meeting:**

Meetings often begin with a moment of silence, followed by a few short readings. The secretary (a volunteer) might ask if there are any "newcomers" in the room for their first or in their first 30 days, and if so, would they care to identify themselves with their *first name only*. This is NOT done to point you out or embarrass you. It's done because as a newcomer you will get the support you need. If you have questions after you get home, please call any of the people who gave you their phone number. You will not be "intruding"... we WANT to help.

## **You do not have to talk.**

AA meetings can take one of several forms (Step discussion, Topic discussion, Speaker, etc.). At any AA meeting you will find alcoholics talking about what drinking did to their lives and personalities, what actions they took to help themselves, and how they are living their lives today. The secretary might ask if you wish to speak, but you do not have to say anything if you don't want to. You can simply say "pass" or "I prefer to just listen, thanks."

## **Passing the basket...**

AA meetings require no dues or fees from its members, but we are fully self-supporting and do have expenses for room rent, coffee and literature. At some point during the meeting, a basket will be passed around to allow the members the opportunity to make a voluntary contribution to the support of their meeting or group. *This is for members only, if you are a visitor, please do not make a contribution* . As a newcomer to AA, please consider yourself our guest.