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VANCOUVER AREA INTERGROUP

Primary Purpose

Alcoholics Anonymous most effective path to alcohol abstinence

This article was taken from the Stanford Medicine News Center at: [https://
med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2020/03/alcoholics-anonymous-most-effective-path-to-
alcohol-abstinence.html](https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2020/03/alcoholics-anonymous-most-effective-path-to-alcohol-abstinence.html)

Alcoholics Anonymous, the worldwide fellowship of sobriety seekers, is the most effective path to abstinence, according to a comprehensive analysis conducted by a [Stanford School of Medicine](#) researcher and his collaborators.

After evaluating 35 studies — involving the work of 145 scientists and the outcomes of 10,080 participants — [Keith Humphreys](#), PhD, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, and his fellow investigators determined that AA was nearly always found to be more effective than psychotherapy in achieving abstinence. In addition, most studies showed that AA participation lowered health care costs.

AA works because it's based on social interaction, Humphreys said, noting that members give one another emotional support as well as practical tips to refrain from drinking. "If you want to change your behavior, find some other people who are trying to make the same change," he said.

Continue this article on the next page!



Inside this issue

Alcoholics Anonymous most effective path to alcohol abstinence.....	1-3
Grapevine Traditions Check-list.....	4
Finance Reports.....	5
S.C. Meeting Minutes.....	6
I.G. Rep Mtg. Minutes.....	7,8
Upcoming Events.....	9

Monthly Business Mtgs.

- ◆ Steering Comm. Mtg. – 06/14@6:00 PM
- ◆ Intergroup Rep Mtg. – 06/21@6:30 PM
- ◆ District 37 GSR Mtg. –06/22 5@7:00 PM
- ◆ District 7 GSR Mtg. - 06/24 @7:00 PM
- ◆ District 27 Committees Mtg.- 06/19@10am
- ◆ District 27 Business Mtg. - 06/19@12 PM

(All monthly business mtgs. are held currently on Zoom).

Alcoholics Anonymous most effective path to alcohol abstinence continued...

The review was published March 11 in *Cochrane Database of Systematic Review*. *Cochrane* requires its authors to undertake a rigorous process that ensures the studies represented in its summaries are high-quality and the review of evidence is unbiased.

“*Cochrane Reviews* are the gold standard in medicine for integration of all the research about a particular intervention,” Humphreys said. “We wanted to do this work through *Cochrane* because of its rigor and reputation.”

The other co-authors are a researcher from Harvard Medical School and a researcher from the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

Though well-known, AA faces skepticism

Although AA is well-known and used by millions around the world, mental health professionals are sometimes skeptical of its effectiveness, Humphreys said. Psychologists and psychiatrists, trained to provide cognitive behavioral therapy and motivational enhancement therapy to treat patients with alcohol-use disorder, can have a hard time admitting that the lay people who run AA groups do a better job of keeping people on the wagon.

Early in his career, Humphreys said, he dismissed AA, thinking, “How dare these people do things that I have all these degrees to do?”

Humphreys noted that counseling can be designed to facilitate engagement with AA — what he described as “an extended, warm handoff into the fellowship.” For the review article, Humphreys and his colleagues evaluated both AA and 12-step facilitation counseling.

AA began in 1935 when two men in Akron, Ohio, were searching for a way to stay sober; they found it by forming a support group. They later developed the 12 steps, the first being accepting one’s inability to control drinking; the last, helping others sustain sobriety by becoming a sponsor of a new member. The AA model — open to all and free — has spread around the globe, and AA now boasts over 2 million members in 180 nations and more than 118,000 groups.

Though the fellowship has been around for more than eight decades, researchers have only recently developed good methods to measure its effectiveness, Humphreys said.

For the *Cochrane* review, the researchers found 57 studies on AA; of those, 35 passed their rigorous criteria for quality. The studies used various methods to measure AA’s effectiveness on alcohol use disorder: the length of time participants abstained from alcohol; the amount they reduced their drinking, if they continued drinking; the consequences of their drinking; and health care costs.

Alcoholics Anonymous most effective path to alcohol abstinence continued...

AA shines

Most of the studies that measured abstinence found AA was significantly better than other interventions or no intervention. In one study, it was found to be 60% more effective. None of the studies found AA to be less effective.

In the studies that measured outcomes other than complete abstinence, AA was found to be at least as effective. For the studies that considered costs, most showed significant savings associated with AA participation: One found that AA and 12-step facilitation counseling reduced mental health costs by \$10,000 per person.

The researchers looked only at studies of AA; they excluded Narcotics Anonymous and organizations focused on addiction to other substances. While it was beyond the scope of their study, Humphreys said the AA review is “certainly suggestive that these methods work for people who use heroin or cocaine.”

Humphreys noted that the findings were consistent whether the study participants were young, elderly, male, female, veterans or civilians; the studies in the review were also conducted in five different countries. “It absolutely does work,” he said of AA’s method.

He added that he feels validated in giving advice to so many patients to try AA: “That was really good advice, and that continues to be good advice,” he said.

Humphreys is a member of the [Wu Tsai Neurosciences Institute](#) at Stanford.

The research was not funded.

Stanford’s [Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences](#) supported the work.





AA GRAPEVINE TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, “I’m not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn’t apply to me”?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
6. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

Financial Statements

	February	March	April	Total	Ytd Forecast	Variance
Income						
Sales	\$ 2,004	\$ 3,094	\$ 2,593	\$ 10,550	\$ 10,000	\$ 550
Group Contributions	\$ 1,955	\$ 1,617	\$ 1,992	\$ 7,388	\$ 10,000	\$ (2,612)
Individual Contributions	\$ 485	\$ 925	\$ 1,447	\$ 3,183	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,183
Miscellaneous Income		\$ 76	\$ 137	\$ 200	\$ (63)	
Fundraising			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	\$ 4,444	\$ 5,636	\$ 6,108	\$ 21,258	\$ 22,200	\$ (942)
Expenses						
COGS	\$ 1,025	\$ 2,217	\$ 1,525	\$ 6,466	\$ 6,000	\$ 466
Fundraising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
CC & Paypal Fees	\$ 65	\$ 57	\$ 66	\$ 227	\$ 420	\$ (193)
Office Supplies	\$ 254	\$ 257	\$ 131	\$ 832	\$ 200	\$ 632
Insurance	\$ 48	\$ 49	\$ 49	\$ 195	\$ 200	\$ (5)
Licenses & Fees	\$ 77	\$ 65	\$ 230	\$ 593	\$ 100	\$ 493
Contract Services	\$ 720	\$ 828	\$ 174	\$ 2,342	\$ 2,700	\$ (358)
Wages	\$ 1,373	\$ 929	\$ 2,854	\$ 7,196	\$ 7,500	\$ (304)
Taxes	\$ 370	\$ 286	\$ 738	\$ 2,314	\$ 2,600	\$ (286)
Copy Machine	\$ 260	\$ 237	\$ 237	\$ 1,072	\$ 1,000	\$ 72
Rent	\$ 962	\$ 962	\$ 975	\$ 3,862	\$ 4,000	\$ (138)
Utilities	\$ 778	\$ 412	\$ 511	\$ 2,062	\$ 1,200	\$ 862
Total Expenses	\$ 5,933	\$ 6,300	\$ 7,489	\$ 27,160	\$ 25,920	\$ 1,240
Net Income	\$ (1,489)	\$ (664)	\$ (1,381)	\$ (5,902)	\$ (3,720)	\$ (2,182)

April 30, 2021 Cash Balances	
Main Checking	\$ 6,056
Event Account	\$ 7,164
Prudent Reserve	\$ 12,870
Till Cash	\$ 100
Total Cash Balance	\$ 26,190

Grant Fund Distributionn		
	Amount	Balance
Beginning	\$ 12,204	\$ 12,204
December	\$ (2,000)	\$ 10,204
January	\$ (2,286)	\$ 7,918
February	\$ (2,093)	\$ 5,825
March	\$ -	\$ 5,825

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Steering Committee meeting of April 12, 2021

Attendance: Dusty, LeeAnn, Patrick, Cassia, Dee, Jennie (hotline), Phil, Julie (Women in Action), Laurie, Marc, Bruce

Opening: The meeting was opened at 6:00pm with the Serenity Prayer. Minutes from the March SC meeting were accepted. Minutes from the March IG meeting were reviewed.

Hotline: Jennie reported that there is a volunteer opportunity on Saturdays 6:00-9:00pm. The committee will be holding it's quarterly meeting on April 20th. The requirement to be a hotline volunteer has been changed from 1 year to 6 months continuous sobriety.

Treasury: Please see attached financial report. Laurie reminded us that we have an open book policy.

Office: LeeAnn advised that customer traffic is beginning to pick up. She stated that she often has slow periods and is looking for more responsibilities.

Old Business/Staffing Costs: As of April 1st Cassia is an unpaid volunteer. The question was asked about having an out of area Office Manager to which it was noted that the guidelines do not have a residency requirement and many items are handled virtually.

Old Business/Audit: Laurie reported that the audit is pending. The auditor wants to get through tax season before auditing the office making scheduling most likely in June.

New Business/Reconciliation of 2020: This is a pending item that will be included in the audit.

New Business/WebMaster: Rachel V has accepted this position.

Old Business/Forecasting: Laurie noted that sales have increased, group donations have decreased and individual donations have increased. The forecast will be adjusted. The forecast is not a budget.

Closing: The meeting was closed with the Serenity Prayer at 7:41pm.

Yours in Service,
Phil B.

Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes

Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Intergroup Representatives meeting of April 19, 2021

The meeting was opened at 6:31pm with the Serenity Prayer. Roll call was taken. A quorum exists. The minutes from the March IG meeting were accepted. Minutes from the March SC meeting were reviewed.

Hotline: Jennie reported that there is a volunteer opportunity for the Saturday 6:00-9:00pm slot. The committee is holding its quarterly meeting 4/20/21.

Treasury: Please see attached report. Laurie reminded that there is an open book policy. She stated that the guidelines regarding the treasury are vague and this issue needs to be visited. Her term expires 12.31.21 and it's time to start looking for a replacement to allow time for training.

Office: Leeann stated that inventory is complete and that she has been ordering product.

Activities: Jenn has no new information for an activity and that she needs to step down due to her job.

Webmaster: Rachel introduced herself as the new webmaster and explained tasks that she will be taking on which includes updating the website, website maintenance and search engine optimization.

Old Business/Audit: Laurie reported the auditor needs to get through the tax season before auditing Intergroup and guidelines need to be better defined.

Dusty, Cornerstone & SC
Julie, Women in Action
Michelle, Ladies by the Lavender
Aiden, Rock Bottom Recovery
Lori, Women's Daily Supplement
Laurie, Sober Uppers & SC
Phil, R360very & SC
Leeann, Office
Heidi, Minnehaha
Robin, Fireside
Cassia, Office
Marc, Miracles at Noon & SC
Carey, Hockinson
Tony, Men's Fireside
Michael, Welcome Home
Bruce, B&P & SC
Kelly, District 27
Patrick, McGillivray Book & SC
Jenn, Doing Right & SC
Rachel, Webmaster
Jennie, Hotline

SC: Steering Committee member

Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes

Continued...

New Business/On-Line Sales: No motion was made however IG reps were asked to discuss the idea of on-line sales with their meetings and bring feedback at next month's meeting. Rachel stated she can set up the technology.

Group News: Remember to notify intergroup of meeting changes:
vancaa@vanintgrp.com

District News: Kelly announced District 27 has a speaker meeting on the last Friday of each month and that they have a new website.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:04pm.

Yours in Service,
Phil B.



For a full description of upcoming events including locations or zoom information, visit the events page on our website at:

www.vancouveraa.org

To add any events to future calendars, please email us your flier at vancaa@vanintgrp.com (even if it's a zoom event)!

All Newsletter submissions are due on the 1st of the month for which you want them published.

Upcoming Events

June 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Wayfarer's Speaker Mtg. on Zoom: 7:00 pm T.T.C.O. Speaker's Mtg.: 7:00 pm
13	14 Steering Committee Mtg.: 6:00 pm	15	16	17	18	19 District 27 Committees Mtg.: 10am-12 pm District 27 Business Mtg.: 12 pm-3 pm
20	21 Intergroup Rep. Mtg.:6:30 pm	22 District 37 Mtg.: 7:00 pm	23	24 District 7 GSR Mtg.: 7 pm	25 District 27 Speaker Mtg.: 7:00 pm	26
27	28	29	30			

The Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous exists to serve local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous within the vicinity of Vancouver, Washington. The Organization serves as a clearing house to distribute literature to local Alcoholics Anonymous groups, to provide contact among these groups, and to maintain an answering service.

**I Am
RESPONSIBLE...**

**When anyone, anywhere,
reaches out for help, I want the
hand of A.A. always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.**

**The Vancouver Area
Intergroup**

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