

About A.A.

A NEWSLETTER FOR PROFESSIONALS

FALL
2022

ALSO INSIDE:

Useful links
to more
information
about A.A.

A.A.'s MEDIA LIBRARY:

Vital ways to reach those who suffer from alcoholism

ACTOR PORTRAYAL

In the nearly nine decades since its inception in 1935, Alcoholics Anonymous has worked closely with professionals from numerous disciplines to help those who suffer from alcoholism stop drinking. A.A. literature and publications, often available from physicians and mental health providers, lawyers, judges and corrections officials, and employment and human resources specialists, have reached thousands. The website aa.org provides a welcome introduction to the A.A. program for many who seek help to stop drinking, and the popular A.A. [Meeting Guide app](#) can be downloaded for Android and iOS,

making it convenient for alcoholics as well as professionals interested in attending open A.A. meetings to find meetings in their area.

AN AVENUE OF SUPPORT

The A.A. [Media Library](#) is a prime resource for professionals seeking to bring the A.A. message of recovery to alcoholics with whom they interact, especially to populations that may not respond readily to the printed word. The Media Library contains easily downloadable audio and video stories that speak directly to the heart of a variety of experiences — individuals trying

GET IN TOUCH: cpc@aa.org • 212-870-3400 • Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 • www.aa.org

SOBRIETY IN A.A.:

“When drinking is no longer a party.”

to get sober at a young age, or in a prison environment, or when suffering from blindness, hearing loss, or a traumatic health incident. Healthcare, legal and corrections, and human resources professionals will find videos targeted to their professional areas that clearly explain A.A.’s mission and how its Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.) groups can reach out to help professionals.

Public service announcements (PSAs) — short videos or audio messages — are an integral part of the A.A. Media Library and a critical part of how A.A. informs the public about the program—what it does and how to contact the Fellowship. PSAs are designed to provide compelling information to those who suffer from alcoholism, or to those who know an alcoholic among their family, friends, or coworkers. The point is to let them know that help may be found in A.A.

PSAs from A.A. are also a primary tool of professionals seeking to help alcoholics who come under their care. A PSA just 60 seconds long can help professionals illustrate how the A.A. program of recovery can work for people from all walks of life, each of whom at some point during the course of their alcoholism has felt that they are alone in the world. PSAs and outreach to professionals provides another avenue of support for the many alcoholics who otherwise might never find recovery.

A NEW APPROACH TO PSAS

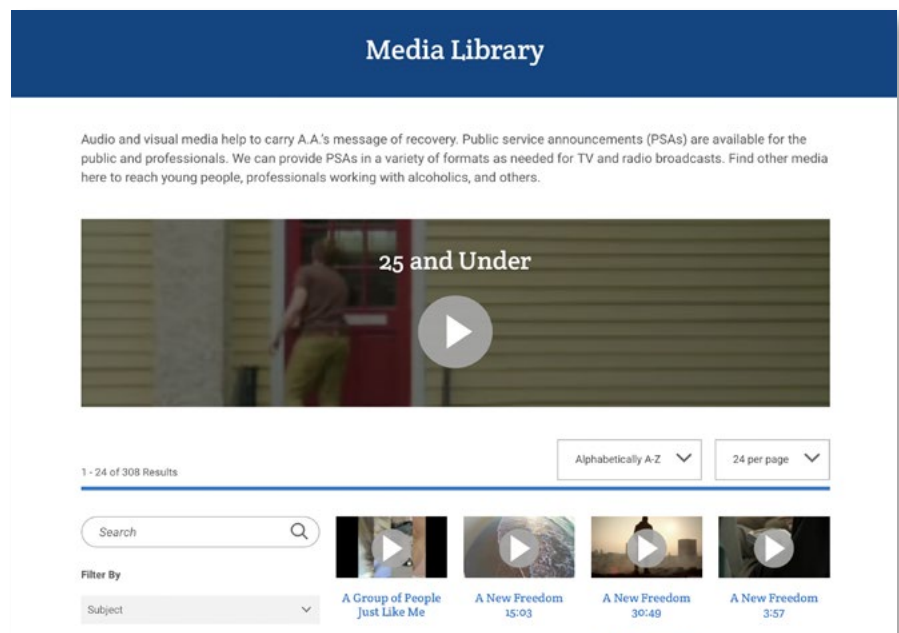
When it comes to PSAs, the old image of a black-and-white video broadcast at 3 a.m. on a grainy, flickering television set is no longer the reality. Professionally produced, PSAs carry the A.A. message through the use of professional actors (in keeping with the A.A. tradition of anonymity) and are presented in 15-, 30- and 60-second versions, as well as in English, Spanish and French. Recent PSAs include “Sobriety in A.A.: My drinking built a wall” and “Sobriety in A.A.: When drinking is no longer a party.” Created and approved through the A.A. General Service Office (G.S.O.), the PSAs carry the message to alcoholics in a way that is in sync with the A.A. tradition of “attraction rather than promotion.”

Each of these new PSAs is an at-

tempt to “broaden A.A.’s reach to potential alcoholics,” says Patrick C., Public Information Coordinator at G.S.O. “In ‘My drinking built a wall,’ we really had a broad-based focus — older alcoholics, younger ones, a middle-aged family man. With ‘When drinking is no longer a party,’ we had a storyline that we felt was going to be relevant for our current times. Its focus is on an alcoholic having a virtual party who finds their way to a virtual A.A. meeting.”

REACHING AN EVER-LARGER NUMBER OF ALCOHOLICS

The PSA videos are available to download from the Media Library, and G.S.O. has distributed them to more than 2,000 major media outlets in the U.S. and Canada. “We’re seeing that the PSAs are playing in the morning, the afternoons, in prime time,” says Patrick. Because the PSAs are digitally encoded, G.S.O. has access to information on how often and where they are played in the U.S. — providing a wealth of data on viewings of the PSAs



As of mid-2022, the English language versions of both videos had been broadcast by 1,900 television stations, with 30,370 airings and 82 million audience “impressions,” meaning that the television set is on when the PSA is playing. This adds up to a media buy value of \$4.6 million.

The Spanish language versions of both videos reached 280 stations, with 13,812 airing, and audience impressions of almost 145 million, the equivalent of a media buy of more than \$7 million.

These numbers illustrate that PSAs are powerful vehicles for carrying the A.A. message. For example, 82 million audience impressions yields a significant number of opportunities for alcoholics to learn they are not alone and where to get help. With the addition of professionals who can recommend the PSAs to those suffering from alcoholism, an even larger number of alcoholics in need of help can be reached.

HOW CAN A.A. HELP YOU?

Are you interested in having an A.A. presentation on a virtual platform for one of your professional gatherings? Or would you like information about recovery from alcoholism in A.A.? If so, please contact the C.P.C. desk at the General Service Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163, or cpc@aa.org. We welcome your questions, comments, and requests.

Others in the professional community have attested to the power of A.A. [In an open letter to healthcare professionals](#), Dr. John A. Fromson, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, asks those specializing in

treating patients who may have a drinking problem to “please keep in mind that a referral to Alcoholics Anonymous can be a life-saving event...As a psychiatrist engaged in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with alcohol use disorders and a past trustee (nonalcoholic) of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, I have seen the process of a sustained recovery facilitated by A.A. happen literally

thousands of times.”

Randall Liberty, the Maine State Commissioner of Corrections, has 36 years of experience in the field of corrections and law enforcement. He says A.A. “provides fellowship, in the sense of belonging, from people who have traveled the same journey as other alcoholics and can speak that truth that only another alcoholic knows.” ■

Meet Two New General Service Board Class A Trustees

Following the General Service Conference in April, the General Service Board selected two new Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees who will serve the Fellowship over the next six years: Kerry Meyer, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, District Court Judge, Fourth Judicial District; and Anadora “Andie” Moss, of Washington, D.C., founder and president of a criminal justice consulting firm. They will replace rotating Class A Trustees Christine Carpenter and Nancy McCarthy, who have served the Fellowship since 2016.

“I had a calling when I was in seventh grade that I was going to be a judge, which was quite hilarious,” says **Kerry Meyer**. “I didn’t know what that meant. But as I explored it, in reality, it was a call to help victims. That’s why I became a prosecutor [Kerry was assistant Hennepin County District Attorney between 1989-2006]. I wanted to help the people who had no voice at the time the crime happened to them. Being their voice in court is what really motivated me.”

Kerry was appointed District Court Judge in the Fourth Judi-



cial District in Minneapolis in 2006. Working in the “biggest and busiest district” in the state, Kerry has presided over cases across the spectrum — felony, juvenile, property, misdemeanor, civil, and more. When she was working in treatment courts, “there was this core group of A.A. volunteers who came to DWI court. They were doing their Twelfth Step work and really helped teach me about sobriety and the difficulties of recovery. I had certainly seen this in my work previously but didn’t understand it in the

“That’s when I became aware of what these Twelve Steps are, not just on paper, but what they are to live.”

profound way that these A.A.s were able to teach me. That’s when I became aware of what these Twelve Steps are, not just on paper, but what they are to live.”

Kerry presided over DWI, Mental Health, and Veterans Treatment Court full time for three and a half years. She ended up learning about, and doing, the Twelve Steps with a group in Minnesota called Study in Action — the class reads the first 164 pages of the Big Book together and explores its meaning. “This is something that I required my DWI Court folks to do. I myself did some important Ninth Step work, although not alcohol-related,” she says. “The whole experience really made me see how alcohol and drug addiction impacted others. I certainly understand that a person who is actually working the Steps, actually attending the meetings — and going to the meeting after the meeting — and who has what is truly a home group has a good chance. The people who struggled in my program were the folks who didn’t actually do A.A. Their relapses started before they picked up a drink when they stopped going to meetings.” Kerry adds: “I honestly believe that A.A. is *the* thing that works. I wouldn’t be spending as much time as I’m about to spend for the next six years if I didn’t believe that.”

Kerry was a speaker at the Inter-

national Convention in Atlanta in 2015 and continues to speak at A.A. events. Of her role as a Class A trustee, she says: “I’m hoping to give back in a productive way for all the time those A.A. volunteers spent in my court and hope that I can have even a small impact when it comes to helping still-suffering alcoholics. There is this incredible responsibility of being able to be the public face of an anonymous organization and I certainly don’t come into this with any agenda. But I tend to be a workhorse and am happy to do whatever needs to be done.”

Andora “Andie” Moss grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, to parents who both served in the Marines in World War II. She had a strong faith-based family and was influenced by some thoughtful youth directors who “en-



couraged a faith that was engaged in the issues of our time. I was always inspired when the church brought in speakers who were doing great things in the world. I also was blessed with being the sibling of a special needs person — my sister is blind and my parents decided to pioneer in mainstreaming her into the Atlanta public school system and my brother and I were very involved in that journey. So, I have always been wired to work with special populations and to do good in the world. I was also a child of the 1960s, so reform and understanding the underserved came almost in my DNA.”

She received two degrees in Education from the University of Georgia and University of Idaho, “but I rambled around for a few years in terms of what I really wanted to do,” she says. “I got interested in sports psychology and recreation therapy and I had the opportunity to work at a large hospital in Atlanta, where I became Director of Activity Therapy. After five years of inpatient crisis work, I really wanted to change directions. Finally, I had an awakening — instead of figuring out what I wanted to be, maybe I should decide who I wanted to be.”

This epiphany led Andie to a career in the criminal justice system. She began working in the Georgia Department of Corrections, writing lesson plans for corrections officers working with inmates with mental health issues. She has stayed in the field for more than 36 years. “I fell in love with what could be done in terms of helping the inmate population as well as the staff who so often are painted with a broad brush of misunderstanding. And I have had many opportu-

nities to progress in that field.”

She worked within the Georgia Department of Corrections until 1996, where she was instrumental in investigating and instituting reforms after wide-spread incidents of sexual abuse of women inmates by corrections staff. She moved on to the U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, where she began “working

her work, becoming aware of “the addictive process very up close” in dealing with people from different walks of life including her own family. She decided to apply for the Class A trustee opening after conversations with one of her mentors, former Class A trustee Allen Ault.

“I’m very anxious to receive my orientation [for the General Service Board] and see what the conversa-

tions are, see what the needs are,” says Andie. “I think what draws me to A.A. is the way it offers hope and a pathway for healing. Hope and healing are what my career has been all about. If I can be helpful in any way to an organization that has really saved the lives of so many, then I think I’ll get more out of it than I put in.” ■

ANDIE:

“I think what draws me to A.A. is the way it offers hope and a pathway for healing.”

throughout the country on issues of sexual abuse in confinement settings. “My view was that it was not only about sex, but the culture of our facilities — the staff culture, the inmate culture — and the external culture in our society.”

After seven years, Andie left the Department of Justice to start her own consulting firm, which works around the country with prisons and jails on the federal, state and local levels, advising on issues that range from sexual safety within institutions to leadership and supervisory development, diversity, equity and inclusion, workforce shortages, how to sustain staff, “For just about any area of corrections,” she says. “I have experts on our team who are dedicated to working with some of the most sensitive issues we face today.”

Andie has encountered the issue of alcoholism during the course of

HIGHLIGHTS

Useful links to more information about Alcoholics Anonymous:

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE WEBSITE:

<https://www.aa.org>

“NEED HELP WITH A DRINKING PROBLEM?”

<https://www.aa.org/new-to-aa>

“AN OPEN LETTER TO HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS”

https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/f-210-AnOpenLettertoHealthCareProf.pdf

From Dr. John A Fromson, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, Vice Chair for Community Psychiatry, Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Chief of Psychiatry, Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital

ABOUT A.A., A.A.’S NEWSLETTER FOR PROFESSIONALS

<https://www.aa.org/about-aa>

FIND LOCAL A.A.: A STATE BY STATE LINK TO A.A.’S CENTRAL OFFICES

https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/find-local-aa

ONLINE INTERGROUP: A.A.’S DIRECTORY OF ONLINE MEETINGS

<https://www.aa-intergroup.org/>

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS LINKEDIN PAGE

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/aaworldservicesinc>

