

The following article has been published as we receive many calls at the National Office about what is attraction and what is promotion? The following information should answer any queries/concerns members may have.

WHAT IS PUBLIC INFORMATION FOR? (Extract from The AA Group Handbook)

Someone has said that the heart of AA is one drunk carrying the message to the other drunk. This is still a good, basic, down-to earth AA way of staying away from the first drink.

Sometimes, the one drunk has used a third person to get the message to the other drunk. One member (Bill) used a non-alcoholic physician (Dr Silkworth) and a hospital to find other alcoholics to keep himself sober. In Akron, to keep himself sober, he used a minister (the Rev Walter Tunks) and a non-alcoholic lay person (Mrs Henrietta Seiberling) to find Dr Bob. Together, to keep themselves sober, Bill and Dr Bob used a non-alcoholic nurse (Sister Ignatia) to locate other alcoholics who needed help. All these methods are still used. The Big Book, now in many languages, can also carry the message, as pamphlets do.

The message has also been carried to many other drunks by newspaper and magazine articles, radio and TV shows and AA public information committees. Institutions committees have carried the message to alcoholics in both treatment and correctional facilities.

Most groups realise now that no alcoholics can come to ask for help until they know where AA is. To tell them, many methods are used by groups.

Sometimes a small saying "AA Meeting Tonight" outside the door of a meeting-place points the way. From AAs earliest days, small newspaper notices and radio announcements of meetings have been used effectively. They work. An AA listing in the telephone directory has proved a life saver for many. Public meetings also frequently carry the message, especially when a group is interested in attracting new members, in saying thank you to old community friends, and in helping alcoholics generally, in or out of A.A.

As long as these methods of carrying the message demonstrate recovery, give information about the AA program (not about alcoholism) and do not boast about AA, they seem to be well within the spirit of Tradition 11.

Many groups regularly invite to their open or public meetings ministers, doctors, hospital and law-enforcement officials, employers, welfare workers and others who deal with alcoholics. Furnishing speakers for non-AA meetings of various organisations in the community also carries the message. (Write to the General Service Office for a helpful pamphlet Speaking at Non-AA Meetings.)

Local central offices may now perform some of these services for the group, but there is much the individual group can do to help. The Public Information Folder, which is available from GSO, can show how.

Should an AA group advertise? Some groups do, but for only one reason, to let the community know of the availability of help through the recovery program. Such small-space advertising, usually in local newspapers, is designed exclusively to let people know how to get in touch with the fellowship, if they so desire. A typical advertisement might look like this:

FACED WITH A DRINKING PROBLEM?
Perhaps Alcoholics Anonymous Can Help
Write to Post Office Box 0000
Or telephone 00.0000
Weekly Meetings Open to the Public
Tuesday 8.00p.m. – Community Health Centre

Copies of The AA Group Handbook can be obtained from your National Office. We also have available a Public Information Workbook, which is a very good resource for those becoming involved in public information work. Both these books are inexpensive.

To obtain a copy, please contact the National Office on (02) 9663-1206 or your local Central Service/District Office.