

WHAT KINDS OF MEETINGS ARE THERE?

- **Open** – for alcoholics and nonalcoholics.
- **Closed** — for anyone who may have a drinking problem and is seeking a solution.
- **Speaker** — An A.A. member tells the story of their recovery journey.
- **Discussion** — Discussion of a chosen topic for the meeting related to recovery.
- **First Step** – Usually for newcomers. Members briefly share their stories of how they were powerless over alcohol and how their lives were unmanageable before recovery.
- **Beginners** — Focusing on the basics of recovery for the newcomer.
- **Literature** – discussion based on readings from various types of AA literature: Big Book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Grapevine articles, or various daily reading books.

CONCERNS ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY

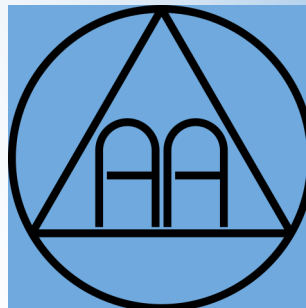
A reminder that is usually posted or stated at each meeting is "*Who you see here, what you hear here, let it stay here.*"

Despite this expectation of anonymity, there is no guarantee. It is strongly suggested that we share personal things with our sponsors or trusted individuals.

The sharing we do in meetings should be of a general nature, preferably related to the recovery topic of the meeting.

Sobriety Hotline: 715-835-5543
or
800-471-9876

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
CHIPPEWA VALLEY INTERGROUP



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF MEETINGS

Meetings give alcoholics an opportunity to learn about the many tools of recovery, find a sponsor, make friends, talk about their recovery and find solutions for problems they experience in their recovery journey.

People who have been sober for a while have an opportunity to continue to learn and grow in their personal recovery and to share their experience, strength and hope with those in early recovery.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF MEETINGS

- **Get to lots of meetings**—especially in early recovery, the more often you go, the more comfortable you will feel. 90 meetings in 90 days is often suggested.
- **Go, even if you don't want to** - the meeting you didn't want to go to may be the one where you heard just what you needed to hear.
- **Show up early** – get to know others and they can get to know you.
- **Celebrate Recovery** – Most groups give out chips or tokens for various lengths of sobriety. Stand up and accept your applause when it's your turn to be recognized.
- **Get a "home group"** – Pick one meeting each week that you won't miss no matter what.
- **Get involved** - Get a job (greeter, coffee maker, clean up, set up, etc.) This will help you feel a part of the group.
- **Sit up front** – there are less distractions and you can hear the message better.

- **Go to different types of meetings** – Examine the various types of meetings that are in your area. Find someone to carpool with to get to out of town meetings and events.
- **Listen to the message, not the messenger** – You might not like everyone in the meetings, but each person has a message that is unique and may be just what you need to hear.
- **Ask for help** – Ask for rides to and from meetings. Ask someone who appears to have some good sobriety to be a temporary sponsor. Ask for phone numbers.
- **Leave your partner at home** – Recovery is personal. It is important to connect with others in recovery. If your partner is sitting next to you, you may be less able to meet others and less inclined to open up about your life.
- **Have fun** – Enjoy developing new skills and building self-confidence as you make new sober friends.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING AT MEETINGS

When we share, others get to know about us and when others share we listen and get to know about them.

Some of the benefits of sharing are:

- Relief of pent up stress
- Hearing a different perspective on problems.
- Brings people together and helps make you feel a part of the meeting.
- Sharing helps clarify what is going on with us. Things become clearer when they are spoken out loud.
- Sharing provides opportunities to talk to other people after the meeting.
- Someone may need to hear what you say.

LISTENING AT MEETINGS

Listening is as important as sharing in meetings. Learn how to be a good listener.

- Plan to stay in your seat and prepare to listen. Get your coffee, go to the bathroom, etc. before the meeting starts.
- Some people like to write down what they are learning
- Turn off your cell phone and put it away.
- Look at the speaker and show that you are listening.
- Defer judgement.
- Empathize and respond appropriately.