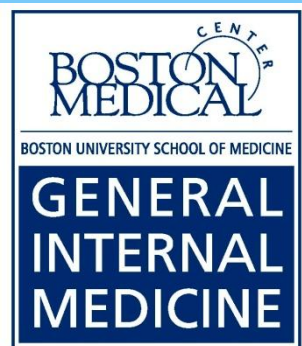
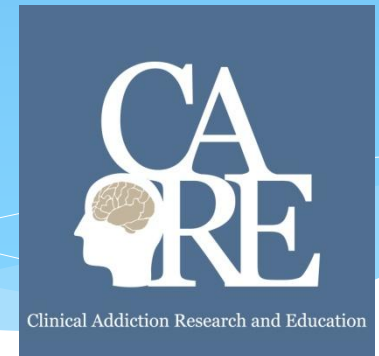


Introduction to Alcoholics Anonymous and Other Twelve Step Programs

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Objectives

- Review the background of AA
- Describe the therapeutic elements to promote recovery
- Briefly review the literature
- Know the guidelines for referring a patient
- Feel comfortable about attending a meeting

Background

- 1935: Bill W. and Dr. Bob meet
- 1939: “Big Book” published
- 2 million members in 182 countries
- Expanded to NA, CA and family support groups
- No group/individual in charge

Background

- Only requirement is desire to stop drinking
- Spiritual, not religious
- Types of meetings: closed v open

Promoting Recovery

- 12 steps
- Sponsorship (self and others)
- Sober environment of meetings
- Forum for telling story with NO judgment
- Anniversaries
- Slogans
- Socializing outside of meetings

Research has shown that:

1. AA attendance is associated with reduced health care costs
2. Longer and more intensive AA involvement is associated with better outcomes
3. Professional addiction treatment plus AA is superior to professional addiction treatment alone
4. All of the above



Does it work?

YES!!

- But... dependent on participants involvement*
- Three mechanisms: self efficacy, increases coping skills and facilitates adaptive changes in social networks**
- Professionals can impact level of affiliation***

*Kaskutas et al. Alcoholics Anonymous careers: patterns of AA involvement five years after treatment entry. Alcohol: Clin Exp Res. 2005; 29 (11):1983-1990

**Kelly JF et al. How do people recover from alcohol dependence? A systematic review of the research on mechanisms of behavior change in AA. Addiction Research and Theory. 2009; 17(3): 236-259

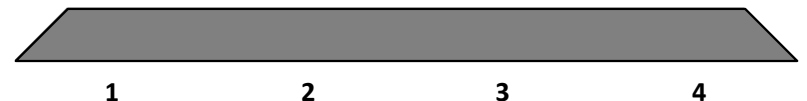
***Humphreys K et al. Self-help organizations for alcohol and drug problem: toward evidence-based practice and policy. Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment. 2004; 26: 151-158

I have referred a patient to Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous.

1. Never
2. Once
3. 2-5 times
4. >5 times

My primary concern about referring patients to Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous is:

1. I don't know much about the programs
2. The programs are too religious
3. The programs emphasize that members are powerless
4. I am not concerned about referring patients



Referring a patient

- Put in touch with member
- Get list of local meetings
- Discuss with patient where they would feel comfortable going
- Encourage going with someone else
- Bring up possible conflicting messages

Possible Conflicts

- Recruitment
- Religion
- Medications
- Powerlessness

I have attended an Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous meeting in the past.

1. Never
2. Once
3. >2 times

Attending a meeting

- Attend only open meetings
- Be honest and direct about who you are
- Respect confidentiality
- No notes
- Feel free to join in the prayer, give a few dollars if you want

References

- Schulz JE et al. Twelve Step Programs in Recovery. In Ries RK, Fiellin DA, Miller SC, Saitz R (editors). *Principles of Addiction Medicine*. 4th ed. pp 911-922.
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