

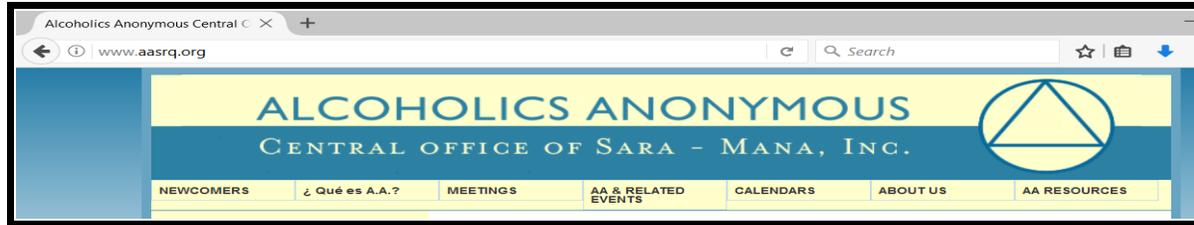


Sara-Mana InterGroup

The May 2017 Issue

District 4, Area 15

AASRQ.org



Are You Plugged In to www.aasrq.org? aasrq.org—It’s MORE Than Just a Meeting Locator!

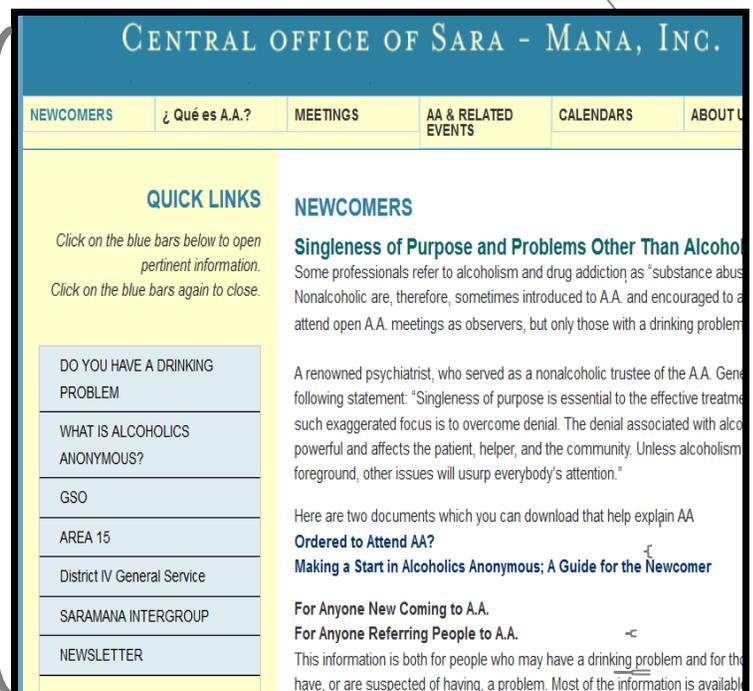
Are you a newcomer who wants to learn more about Alcoholics Anonymous in Sarasota and Manatee Counties? Perhaps you’ve been in the program and want to know what’s going on in General Services or InterGroup? Are you looking for AA service opportunities? The Central Office of Sarasota and Manatees’ aasrq.org website provides convenient and comprehensive local and national resources for EVERYONE. There is also a portion of the site dedicated to Spanish-speaking individuals. Here are just a few of the things you will experience while perusing aasrq.org:

- ✓ Read The Big Book Online!
- ✓ Find Local, Regional, and National Events!
- ✓ Link to the General Service Headquarters in NY!
- ✓ Access Area 15’s AA Delegate’s Report!
- ✓ Learn about the Sara-Mana Central Office!

- ✓ Explore Service Work Opportunities!
- ✓ Link to “The Grapevine,” the International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous!
- ✓ Connect to additional Local, Regional, and National AA Websites
- ✓ Download a copy of the local AA Meeting Schedule!

Aasrq.org includes an extensive “Newcomers” section (the first tab on the top of the website), which explains the singleness of purpose of AA and has sections such as “Making a Start in Alcoholics Anonymous: Guide for the Newcomer,” and “Ordered to Attend AA?” The easy-to-navigate site features ‘quick links’ on the left of the home page, including “Do You Have a Drinking Problem?,” “What is Alcoholics Anonymous?,” links to our monthly newsletter, and district (District IV) General Service and InterGroups.

Tony F., Manager of the Sara-Mana InterGroup’s Central Office, says, “aasrq.org is an invaluable, interactive repository. Alcoholics in all stages of their recovery can visit the site to choose the tools that the site offers to help their sobriety.”



Alcoholism comes into the family like a thief.

During my active drinking years I was convinced that the only one I was hurting was myself. And even that took a long time to admit, because, for a long time, I didn't think I was hurting anybody. I mean, 2 DUIs, but no injuries or deaths. Total financial collapse, but my spouse and I still had a house, a couple of old cars, some pets, food, etc. What was the harm?

I have been through the steps once, and am almost finished working them for a second time. Naturally, I made amends to my family, twice now, during the process. But recently I learned of some hurt I had caused that I hadn't even thought of.

I found out that my niece (26), to whom I have been close since her birth, despite geographic separation, has been talking to her therapist about a fear she has. She is afraid that I am going to die. Can't really blame her. In 2013, I spent about 6 days in a coma because my internal organs were shutting down due to drinking. Both of my parents (her grandparents) are still alive in their 80's, and she is afraid that I am going to die. I had to admit that without sobriety, I am the most likely to die in my family. How do I make amends for damage like that?

My sponsor told me that my niece's fear of death was not necessarily caused by me. Everyone fears death. I just put a face on it. So the only amends that I can make in this situation is to keep doing what I have to do to stay sober and create a new reality for my family: that they don't have to worry about me dying – at least from alcohol. I'll keep coming back.

Kris K.

Where's My Gold Star?! Rebuilding Trust with the Family

With more than 2 years of sobriety under my belt, I was stung when my parents still refused to let me have the key to their beautiful condo on the beach while they were away. "But I'm not drinking anymore!" I whined to my sponsor. "I don't get it! I've made my amends, what more can I do for these people? It's just not right!" Soon, my hurt turned into a creeping, insidious resentment.



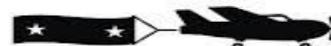
Suddenly one of the promises hit me square in the face. "We will not regret the past, nor wish to shut the door on it." I was OK with the "not regretting" part, however, it sounded like I was asking EVERYONE, including myself, to "shut the door on it."

Then I forced myself to confront a time when I was active. When I screamed and scared my mother after she came home, and a few drinks for me became a party with people I didn't even know in her house. When the police came and took me away, I saw pain in her eyes, but I didn't want to remember it. I was deeply active and in denial.

I've learned in the program that trust comes with consistency and time. And even if you've done your very best, there are some family members that will never forgive OR forget what you did while you were active.

Acceptance is what gets me through the day now. Sometimes I need to work on it, but, as long as I keep trusting in my higher power, this program, and myself, I think I'll be OK!

Maria C



We Want Your Feedback ...

As someone in recovery, what would you think if you were enjoying the beach and you saw a banner flying above:
"Do You Have a Drinking Problem? We Have a Solution!"

Email us! newsletter@aasrq.org

Share the

Journey

Bill Wilson believed that the personal stories in the back of the Big Book could be more instructive to the recovering alcoholic than the main text itself. The following excerpt is from “He Lived Only to Drink.”

Page 446-451, Fourth Edition, Alcoholics Anonymous.

... I came to believe that I cannot do this alone. From childhood, despite the love I had experienced, I had never let people, even those closest to me, inside my life. All my life I had lived the deepest of lies, not sharing with anyone my true thoughts and feelings. I thought I had a direct line to God and I built a wall of distrust around myself. In A.A., I faced the pervasive “we” of the Twelve Steps and gradually realized that I can separate and protect my sobriety from outside hazards only inasmuch as I rely on the sober experience of other A.A. members and share their journey through the steps to recovery.

Edgar C.



“See, you are the one with a drinking problem. When was the last time you seen me spill a drop?”

—Doug R., *The Grapevine*, 10/13



Dear Alkie,

“Alkie” is a long-time member of A.A. His comments are based on his own strength, hope, and experience, and do not represent any official A.A. position or practice.

Q. I’ve been sober for a while and made amends. Problem is my immediate family – if I come home late, the kids ask where I’ve been and my husband gives me a ‘sniff test’ when he kisses me. What do I have to do?

A. Oh, that’s simple -- a “living amend” -- every day for the rest of your life. Changing how we feel, think, and behave may be the hardest thing we must do, but it gets easier with time. Your spouse and kids probably got the brunt of your alcoholism, and, if you’re a repeat offender, they have the right to be skeptical. Re-earning their trust won’t be easy; the responsibility is yours, not theirs. And don’t ask me for help -- that’s why you have a sponsor and a Higher Power.

Q. My self-esteem was gone after living with a verbally abusive drunk for years. I found Al-Anon and feel better about myself. After some time, my husband joined AA, but he is struggling. How can I help him get sober?

A. Be encouraging when warranted, but reserved -- it’s his battle to win or lose. You know you can’t ‘make him better’ and he has an incurable disease. If he’s emotional when sober, stay calm -- it’s part of healing. Insist on meeting attendance; ask if he has a sponsor. If he relapses, suggest in-patient rehab may be necessary. Most important -- protect yourself and stay close to your Al-Anon support.

Q. Fifth month and time to admit my flaws -- does it have to involve another person?

A. Yes, and choose your confessor carefully. A wise person can help you better understand yourself and stay sober. Usually it’s your sponsor, but, if the statute of limitations hasn’t ended, think of someone with privilege, like a clergyman or lawyer.

